

LIFE IN GOD

OF

THE POWER AND TRIUMPH

OF PERFECT LOVE

by

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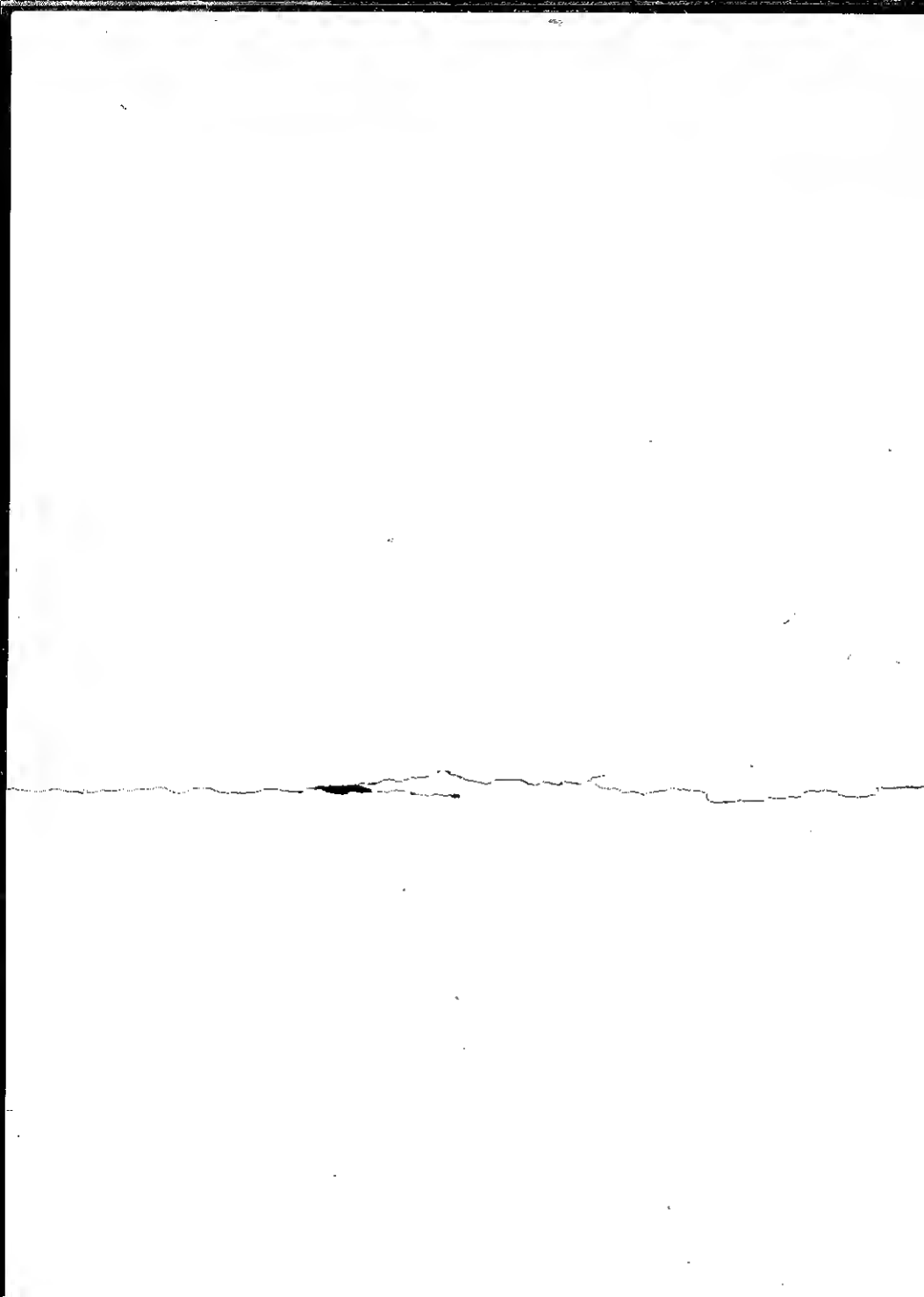
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*To my Wife and Children,
God's Gifts in This Life
And Fellow-heirs
Of the Promise*



PREFACE

Psychology is a popular science today and its findings and theories are having an ever wider application. Some of its knowledge is correct and useful; however some of its theories and conclusions are not only mistaken but definitely and dangerously unscriptural, producing confusion and harm in the thinking of many.

This is not a treatise on psychology, but we have endeavoured to show the basis and governing principles of the spiritual psychology revealed in Scripture. Through God's Word we can know ourselves and understand our fellow-men. We can understand the inner reactions and conflicts of the soul, know the reasons for them, and discover the way to the abundant life of victory, fruitfulness and peace that God has provided for us in Christ through the indwelling Spirit.

We know of no book dealing with the subject comprehensively from this point of view and feel that such a study is needed and will be helpful to God's people. To us these truths have indeed been master-keys opening vast stores of the glorious wisdom and knowledge of God. This blessing we would share with those who love the Lord and desire to know Him and His will and power and enter into the fulness of communion with Him, which is true life.

The teaching given here is supplementary to that presented in *The New Testament Order for Church and Missionary*. In that book the spiritual, Scriptural order for the Church is considered. Here it is the believer himself, the member of the Body of Christ, that is dealt with. If the Church is to be New Testament in structure and power, its members must know God and the spiritual provision He has made for their life and service.

Part of the material presented here has appeared in articles written for *Field News*, the magazine of the New Testament Missionary Union. There were many requests for the republication of these articles, but we have felt that a presentation of the subject in a more co-ordinated and complete form would be more useful.

Our prayer is that the Holy Spirit will use that which is of the Lord and give revelation and understanding. He alone can make God's truth a living reality in our lives and He is abundantly able to do so. We shall be glad to hear from any reader who may desire to fellowship regarding these matters.

ALEX. R. HAY

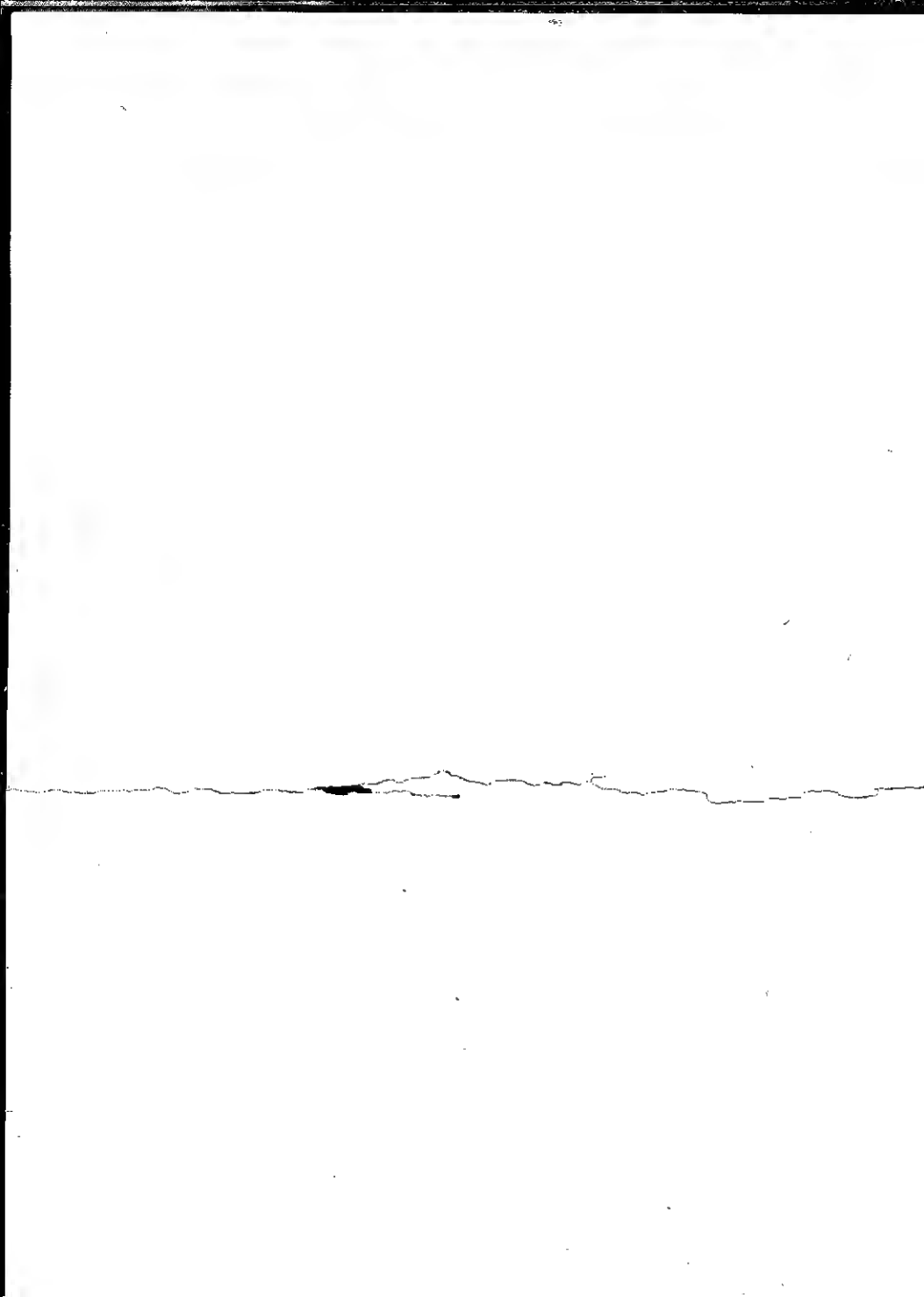
CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	6
<i>PART I Love and Self-love — Two Laws in Conflict</i>	
Chapter 1 God and His Purpose for Man	13
2 Satan's Sin	19
3 Man's Fall	25
4 Good and Evil	61
5 The Cosmos	69
<i>PART II Man — the Marred Image</i>	
Chapter 6 The Nature of Man	85
7 The Body	98
8 The Mind	104
9 The Will	116
10 The Nature of Love	121
11 The Emotions	131
<i>PART III The Cosmos and the Cross</i>	
Chapter 12 God's Witness in the Cosmos	137
13 The Meaning of the Cross	144
14 Gethsemane	157
<i>PART IV Life in Christ</i>	
Chapter 15 What is the Victorious Life?	165
16 The Offence of the Cross	182
17 Faith and Hope	185
18 'Ye Shall Receive Power'	192
<i>PART V Serving in the Spirit</i>	
Chapter 19 Soulsh Service	199
20 The Cost of Ministry	210
21 Praying in the Spirit	219
22 The Believer's Authority in Christ	228
23 Principles of Guidance	232
24 Our Place in Service	239
25 The Work of Demons	245
26 Christ Our Life	253

CHARTS

1 God	12
2 Satan, Before and After the Fall	18
3 Satan's Changed Heart	20

4	Perfect Love and Self-love	23
5	Man, Before and After the Fall	26
6	God's Provision for Man	28
7	The Two Trees	32
8	The Promise	56
9	The Ark of the Covenant	57
10	The Promise Fulfilled	57
11	The Tree of Life and the Forbidden Tree	62
12	The World, Before and After the Fall	68
13	Out of the Heart are the Issues of Life	84
14	Man, A Tripartite Being	91
15	The Will	93
16	If the Heart is Corrupt	95
17	The Emotions	130
18	The Word of God	164
19	Christ Our Victory	167
20	The Holy Spirit's Part	169
21	Towards Fulfilment	171
22	The Two Natures	174
23	The Two Laws	176
24	The Victory Given — But	179
25	Soulsh Service and Spiritual Service	198
26	Soulsh Prayer and Prayer in the Spirit	220



PART I

LOVE AND SELF-LOVE – TWO LAWS IN CONFLICT

*'God is love; and he that dwelleth
in love dwelleth in God, and God
in him'. – 1 Jn. 4:16.*

SPIRIT

ONE

manifested in

THREE PERSONS

Eternal

Omnipresent

Immutable

Omnipotent

Omniscient

In His Nature

GOD

FATHER, SON, HOLY SPIRIT

IS

LOVE

In His Character

Truth

Justice

Mercy

Faithfulness

HOLY

DESIGNED BY: ALEX. R. HAY

DRAWN BY: H. R. PRICHARD

CHAPTER I

GOD AND HIS PURPOSE FOR MAN

What is wrong with the world? Why is there suffering and fear in the midst of so much that is beautiful and good? Why does peace and security elude even those who earnestly seek it? Why is there a guilt consciousness ever present in the heart of man? Is there a key to the understanding of these things, a light to reveal the way, a chart by which we may set a course that will lead to that which will bring peace and dispel all fear?

Is there a meaning to life, to this world, to the universe? Is there a great underlying reason that will explain what seems dark and give glorious meaning both to time and to eternity; a foundation principle upon which we may set all the many pieces of our puzzle and find that we have a structure that stands complete and foursquare, and that will stand not only now but throughout all time?

Yes, there is a meaning; there is a principle. God has given clear light that we may understand the life we live and the world we live in. And that light is God Himself and the fact that He is love — a fact the great consequences of which even God's people have been slow to understand. For the great foundation principle of His universe is love.

We are told that science is discovering love. Physicians are beginning to realize that love, or the lack of it, has a profound effect on the health of man. Psychologists and welfare workers are finding that love is a basic necessity for man's mental and physical welfare. Students of nature now tell us that all animal life will respond to love.

Even Bertrand Russell, the atheist, through the mist of his human reasoning, catches a vague glimmer of the truth, which forces him to confess, somewhat apologetically, "The root of the matter, a very simple and old-fashioned thing, a thing so simple that I am almost ashamed to mention it for fear of the derisive smile with which wise cynics will greet it — is love, Christian love, or compassion. If you feel this, you have a motive for existence, a guide in action, a reason for courage, an imperative necessity for intellectual honesty. If you feel this, you have all anybody should need in the way of religion. Although you may not find happiness, you will never know the deep despair of those whose life is aimless and void of purpose; for there is always

something that you can do to diminish the awful sum of human misery”.

But science is still far from discovering love. And the pessimistic atheist, with a love mixed with despair, a love without faith and hope, is far from understanding it. Man by his wisdom cannot know God. The love which is God and which is the basis of God's universe is something far vaster and more fundamental than man's mind, in its present condition, can grasp. Moreover, it is that which man's wisdom has rejected and denied. Yet, although it is beyond fallen man's wisdom, God has maintained a witness to it among men and all those who have loved God have been enabled by His Spirit to know it (Eph. 3:17-19).

To learn what love is we must go to God, for He alone is perfect love and He alone can reveal the unsearchable riches and power of that which is the foundation of His universe. And we shall not go to Him in vain.

God is Love

In seeking to express the nature and character of God as revealed in Scripture, and the motives that have impelled Him in His acts, we must accept the fact that any human definition must fall far short of the greatness and wonder of His being. Yet the revelation that has been given us is not lacking in clearness or in any necessary detail. God has revealed Himself to the man who would know Him.

God is love. Love is not merely an attribute of God; it is the essence of His being. His attributes are derived from it. All His thoughts and purposes are expressions of it. All His actions are motivated and controlled by it. His whole being is ruled by the law of perfect love.

God is omnipotent. But if we say, God is omnipotence, we know that such a definition of Him is entirely inadequate, for He is infinitely more than omnipotence. God is omniscient. Yet, again, if we say, God is omniscience, we know that we are no nearer the truth. But if we say, God is love, we are satisfied, for we sense that that fathoms the depth of His being. (Eph. 3:18, 19.)

God's love, of course, is not the imperfect, limited, weak thing that man knows as love, but perfect love, into which no impurity or weakness of any kind enters. It is love in its absolute, perfect manifestation.

All good is derived from perfect love. Truth, justice, holiness, purity, mercy, kindness, faith, patience, longsuffering, unselfishness, hope, joy, peace, unity — all are products of love. They

are its natural and inevitable fruits. When they are the fruit of perfect love they are perfect. Perfect love also, from its very nature, is perfect in wisdom, omniscient, omnipotent, invincible and eternal (1 Cor. 13:4-8, 13). In God we see the perfect manifestation of all this.

Love is an active not a passive force. It is not a theoretical or abstract principle. It has no existence apart from its manifestation. To say that one loves God or man has no reality except as there is the evidence of that love. God's love is manifested in action. (Isa. 63:9; Jn. 3:16; 13:1.)

Love must express itself; therefore it requires an object. For that reason God created man.

But, essential also to love is the communion of love. Therefore love's object must be capable of returning love. So God created man in His own image and likeness, with love as the ruling principle of his being.

Love must be intelligent and voluntary. Therefore God created man an intelligent being with an absolutely free will. A being that loved because he was obliged to do so, or because he could not do otherwise, would be incapable of true love. He could not provide the true communion of love that love requires.

But the communion of love is not love's ultimate objective. It cannot satisfy love fully. Love is a creative force, and communion that is sterile is not the product of perfect love. Love that does not go beyond communion and produces only personal enjoyment is selfish and is not true love. Love finds its perfect fulfilment in a fellowship of service which has as its objective the producing of the fruits of love in benefit to others. The true communion of love, therefore, is found in fellowship in love's work. So God created man to co-operate with Him in His great, eternal purposes of love.

The catechism states that "man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever". That definition is not satisfactory; it is not free from the sterility of selfishness. Man's chief end is to be a co-labourer with God in the ministry of perfect love. The glory to God and the enjoyment to man are fruits of that fellowship in love's service.

It was for such service that God placed man on the earth. He placed him in a position in which the full expression of love was possible. Man's position was an exalted one. He was made a co-labourer with God in the works of love. He was to replenish the earth, having power to create beings in his own image: beings to love, who were capable of fully returning his love and

with whom he could fellowship in love's work. He was to subdue and use all the forces and resources of the earth, to exercise dominion over all its living creatures and to be its head and ruler under God.

The extent of the great forces, laws and material resources in the earth and in this universe that were placed at his disposal can only be conjectured by man today. The more he discovers in his fallen state, the more it becomes evident that there are vast stores still beyond his ken. Man in his perfect state would know them all and through this adequate provision the extent of his dominion and of his accomplishment would have been unlimited in the sphere in which he was placed.

To fulfil this mission he was endowed with great powers. He was a tripartite being, spirit, soul and body, completely equipped for the task God entrusted to him. His mental powers were great and at their highest capacity. His intelligence was unclouded. His heart was pure and undefiled. His body was perfect as a material dwelling for soul and spirit. Through the five physical senses he had the necessary access to the material realm. Through the spirit he had contact with the spiritual realm.

In his relation to God he was ruled by one commandment: to love Him with all his heart, mind and strength (Matt. 22:36-40). This was not an arbitrary commandment imposed upon him by God. The fundamental law of love is that perfect love should receive perfect love in return. God gave and continues to give perfect love to man. He asked only what He gave. But also, as in God's love to man there entered the affection and duty of the Creator and Father, so in man's love for God filial affection and duty entered.

Man's relation to his fellow-men was ruled by one commandment, the corollary of the first commandment: to love his neighbour as himself. That commandment also was not an arbitrary one. It is basic to love's nature.

We are told that upon these two fundamental commandments "hang all the law and the prophets". Involved in them is the whole moral law. God's rule over man and man's obedience to Him were not based upon the right of a dictator or owner but upon the fundamental laws of love and right.

Man was not made to live alone. God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone". God placed him in families, making the family, not the individual, the unit of society. In the family, love was the reason, purpose and basis for its existence. It gave love its perfect fulfilment. It gave man's nature, as God had made

it—made in God's likeness—a sphere for perfect expression, wellbeing and happiness. Its purpose was not selfish. It was for love's work of creation—the creating of love in benefit to others. It was for the expression of perfect love, the expression of God's own nature. Even now the relation of husband and wife is likened to that between Christ and the Church (Eph. 5:24-31).

Man's government of the earth and his use of all its forces and resources were based upon the law of love, as was God's relationship to all His creatures and His government of the universe. That principle governed all created things upon earth. All were created for the expression of love. They were created to live according to the law of love. Under the government of love they were in their perfect state and the purpose of the God of love was fulfilled.

Man's perfect love for God produced perfect confidence in God. In his heart there was no doubt of God's wisdom and justice. The love that ruled in his own heart gave him perfect understanding of the principles and objectives of God's rule and enabled him to enter into intelligent, voluntary and joyful co-operation with God in the government of the earth. His obedience was not submission to arbitrary commands. It was the obedience of love: the willing, glad, understanding obedience rendered to the one to whom the whole heart's affection is due and is given. It is the obedience which Christ seeks now of those whom He has redeemed: "If ye love Me, keep my commands", the love He required of His servant Peter when He asked, "Lovest thou Me?"

CREATED SPIRIT

ANointed

COVERING CHERUB

in the Mountain
of God.

Ruling Principle

PERFECT LOVE

To God and Neighbour

Heart perfect before God

Perfect in Beauty

Full of Wisdom

Perfect in His Ways

ORIGINAL STATE

SATAN

FALLEN STATE

Ruling Principle

SELF-LOVE

Self-interest

Heart lifted up with Pride

Beauty Deceptive

Wisdom Corrupted

*Full of Iniquity
Murderer - Father of lies*

The Lawless One

USURPING

PRINCE AND GOD

OF THE COSMOS

THE SERPENT

DESIGNED BY: ALEX R. HAY

DRAWN BY: H. R. PRICHARD

CHAPTER II

SATAN'S SIN

The law of perfect love reigned in the heart of God, in the heart of man and upon earth, yet there existed within the universe which God had created another law: a law which was the negation of perfect love. That law is the law of self-love and its manifestations are called sin and iniquity.

Sin has been described as, 'Any transgression of or want of conformity unto the will of God'. That definition is unsatisfactory. It leaves the impression that sin is disobedience to the arbitrary commands of God, which is incorrect. Sin is the negation of that which is good, true and just. It is the negation of the law of perfect love, which is the source of all good.

The negation of perfect love is self-love. It is fallen love, governed by a law that is entirely contrary to that of perfect love. Its basis is self-interest and its ultimate fruits are pride, envy, falseness, lawlessness, injustice, selfishness, cruelty, fear, hate, division. All these have their origin in the heart in which the law of self-love reigns, in which self-interest is the objective. Self-love rejects and despises the law of perfect love. It places self before truth and justice and kindness.

It is important to distinguish between sin and the fruits of sin. Immorality, murder, theft, etc., are merely fruits of sin; and they are not necessarily its inevitable fruits. A highly moral man can be as much a sinner as an immoral man. The root sin is love of self which excludes from the heart true love of God and man. Sin is making oneself one's own god. Immorality may be the result if that is what pleases self, as it often does. But sometimes a highly moral, self-righteous life is what pleases self, satisfying self's pride and creating independence of God. That man's morality becomes as much a fruit of sin as the other's immorality. It is thus that God judges sin and condemns all men equally, the immoral and the seemingly moral, as sinners.

By self-love we mean a selfish love of self. There is a love of self that is pure and good. The law of love requires that a man love his neighbour as himself. But that love of self has no selfishness. It hates selfishness and all that is sin, and produces that pure and true valuation of self and that dignity and sacrifice of self that was manifested in Christ.

We find the first appearance of the law of self-love in Satan

THE RESULTS OF SATAN'S CHANGED HEART

BEFORE

THOUGHTS

Wisdom perfect

Light
pure

DESIRES

In unison with
God's desires

PLANS

According to
God's Will

PERFECT
LOVE

ACTIONS

Perfect in
His ways

WORKS

The works of
perfect love

WORSHIP

Pure

AFTER

THOUGHTS

Wisdom darkened

Light
Darkened

DESIRES

Self glory
and gain

PLANS

To sit in the
Seat of God

SELF
LOVE

ACTIONS

Full of
iniquity

WORKS

Filled with
violence and sin

WORSHIP

Defiled

Designed by: A.R.Hay

Drawn by: H.R.Pritchard

and it is necessary that we consider the fall of that great angel if we are to understand the history and present condition of men.

There are excellent books that present the teaching of Scripture regarding Satan and to these we would refer the reader for a fuller study of this subject. Here we shall deal only briefly with facts concerning him that are essential to our study.

Entirely wrong conceptions are current, even among Christians, regarding Satan. The popular picture of him as a hideous being with horns, tail and cloven hoofs is the exact opposite of the Scriptural description which reveals him as highly endowed by God with wisdom and beauty.

This ignorance about him can be readily understood when we remember that he is a spiritual being and, therefore, belongs to a sphere into which men's natural or soul powers cannot penetrate. The only information concerning him, his origin, personality, character, purpose, methods and destiny, is that given in Scripture. That means that the less God's Word is known, the more ignorance there is regarding Satan. Moreover, it has been to his advantage to obscure the true facts concerning himself, for the result is that when he presents himself as an angel of light, innocent-appearing and seeking man's welfare, he is not recognized as Satan.

There is very much in Scripture about him, most of it in simple and clear language. Some of the statements regarding his origin, such as Ezek. 28:11-19, and Isa. 14:12-15 are couched in highly figurative, symbolic language. Human language, adapted to the material realm, is, perforce, inadequate to describe the facts of the spiritual realm. However, these passages make perfectly clear to us what we need to know.

Satan belonged to a very high order of celestial beings created by God. Originally he occupied an exalted position in the spiritual government of God's creation, superior, evidently, to that of the archangel Michael himself. The precise nature of the part which he took in that government is not revealed.

Satan's sin is clearly described. He had been perfect from the day God created him. In him there had been, therefore, the perfect fulfilment of the basic commandment of God's law: he had loved his Creator with all his heart, mind and strength and his neighbour as himself, and his participation in the carrying out of God's purposes of love had been faithful and true. But a day came when God found "iniquity" in him. "Thine heart" God's Word says of him, "was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness".

The result of this was, "Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High".

His 'heart' (the seat of the affections and all that flows from them) was lifted up with pride. He loved his own beauty—he loved himself. True love had been dethroned in his heart and self-love had taken its place. That meant the complete change of his character, outlook and purposes. It turned the heart that had been pure and perfect before God into a heart full of iniquity: full of all the fruits of self-love.

He was "Lucifer (light-bearer), son of the morning". His light had been pure; now the light that was in him was darkness (Matt. 6:23). He had been "full of wisdom", but now his wisdom, great as it was, was entirely corrupted. He himself, his own personal interest, became the centre of every thought, ambition and plan and he became blinded to all else. It is said that "love is blind, but there is no love blinder than self-love". No longer was he capable of true wisdom, which only perfect love can know. Self-interest and personal ambition ruled his heart and, therefore, his mind and will. It became his law. Rejecting true law, he became "the lawless one" (2 Thess. 2:8, Weymouth).

Not only Satan but many angels with him fell into this sin. They rejected all authority but their own. They exalted their own intelligence to a position above God's and, under Satan's leadership, set up their rebel State.

It is made clear that the results of the change in Satan's character were similar to those which have followed from the corruption of man's heart. In the charge against Satan we read, "By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned... Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee..." (Ezek. 28:15, 18).

Here we have pictured a political economy based upon self-interest and a selfish commercialism carried on for personal gain and aggrandizement, producing violence and suffering and even invading the sanctuaries and filling them with iniquity.

Just what form this political economy and commercialism took in the spiritual realm which Satan governed we do not know, but their spirit and fruit are surely those of modern politics and commercialism. And the defilement of the sanc-

PERFECT LOVE

God's Character
The Tree of Life

FRUIT

Perfect love to God
Love to neighbour

Holiness

Purity

Truth

Justice

Faith

Hope

Joy

Peace

Humility

Meekness

Unselfishness

Self-sacrifice

Longsuffering

Patience

Compassion

Mercy

Happiness

SELF-LOVE

Satan's Character
The Tree of Knowledge
of Good and Evil

FRUIT

Horred of God
Indifference to neighbour

Lawlessness

Selfishness

Falseness

Injustice

Sin

Greedy

Cruelty

Corruption

Vice

Vanity

Covetousness

Pride

Suffering

Fear

Murder

War

Despair

tuaries differs not in character from that to be found in the organized Church today.

God said that "a fire from the midst of thee" would devour Satan. Proceeding from his own corrupt heart and wisdom would come that which would accomplish his ruin. The inherent corruption that was there would of itself inevitably produce its own death—such death as we see produced in all departments of the system which Satan has set up upon the earth today, and in the Church wherever his wisdom has penetrated. "The wages of sin is death".

From the time of Satan's fall we see two basic principles in conflict: perfect love and self-love. We see two thrones at war: God's throne and the usurper's. Never can there be any truce, any compromise, between these two principles, between these two thrones. Love and self-love are opposites, the deadliest of enemies. Satan hates the God of love; the God of perfect love hates self-love in all its manifestations. As different as light is from darkness, so is the fruit of love from the fruit of self-love. If love is to reign, self-love and all its works must be rooted out and destroyed. If self-love is to live and reign, the God of perfect love and all His work must be banished forever. The final issue of the conflict is not in doubt; love is indestructible, invincible. This, Satan does not admit. He does not perceive it or believe it because his wisdom is darkened. But the cost to love is infinite.

CHAPTER III

MAN'S FALL

In the account of the fall of man which we are given in the first chapters of Genesis, we witness the great conflict between the two thrones—God's Throne and Satan's rebel throne—and between the two laws—that of perfect love and that of self-love. We shall go into detail, drawing attention briefly to the significant facts, for they are basic to an understanding of man's present condition and relationship to God.

The account of the fall is not an allegory but a statement of historical facts of transcendent significance. What took place is described in language, sometimes literal, sometimes figurative. The figures employed are not obscure but rich and profound in meaning, revealing clearly the great principles involved in the battle for man's soul.

Why has God employed figurative language here? Because through it He sounds deeper depths than had He spoken in another form. Beneath the figures used there is a profound meaning. That meaning is for those who search the Scriptures, comparing scripture with scripture. As the Lord said: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear".

The interpretation which we give here accords with the things God has revealed subsequently to man in the Scriptures. But the more we understand the story of the fall as God has given it to us, the more we realize that it has depths of meaning beyond what has yet been fathomed—beyond, possibly, what God considers necessary for us to know at present, but that later, when we no longer know only in part, we shall be able fully to understand. The mystery it contains is great, the implications transcendent, the principles involved so fundamental that the very life of the universe depends upon them.

Unfortunately, the popular interpretations of the fall are superficial and inaccurate, much to the benefit of Satan's purposes. In some cases they fail to present the true character of God and the true nature of man's sin.

The story of the fall reveals the great, basic principles that were in conflict and lays the foundation for all God's future relations with men. It discovers the sources of all the influences that, from then on, have played upon the soul of man, affecting his every thought and action and ruling his destiny. A true under-

MADE IN LIKENESS OF GOD

Communion with God
Through the Spirit

RULER OF EARTH
UNDER GOD

Ruling Principle

PERFECT LOVE

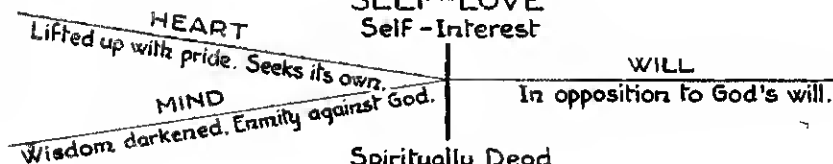
To God and Neighbour



Ruling Principle

SELF-LOVE

Self-Interest



Spiritually Dead

Ruler of Earth
Under Satan

In the Likeness of
His "Father the Devil"

DESIGNED BY: ALEX R. WAY
DRAWN BY: H. R. PRICHARD

standing of its meaning is one of the great keys to the opening of Scripture.

First of all, the creation of the earth and of man is described. In the first chapter of Genesis we see the Earth "without form and void". A new creation is brought into being. God caused the earth to bring forth "grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself". He created every living thing after its kind. Finally, He formed man from "the dust of the earth", making him in His own image and likeness and breathing into him "the breath of life". And He declared His creation to be "good".

God's Provision for Man

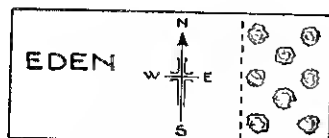
What is given in the second chapter of Genesis is not a recapitulation of the creation story told in the first chapter, or another account of the creation. It presents the situation in which man was placed in the creation prior to the fall. We are told of a garden of trees in the east of Eden which God planted and in which He placed man: "The Lord God planted a garden eastward in (on the east side of) Eden and there He put the man He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil". This is not Eden, but a garden in Eden.

God had already caused fruit trees to grow upon the earth, but this was a special "garden" of special "trees" prepared by God for man. Its meaning is rich in spiritual significance. It was "on the east side of" Eden. The "east" (where the light rises) speaks of worship and communion with God. There were "trees" which God caused the "ground" to produce. Then there were two other "trees" not produced by the ground. One of these, the "tree of life", occupied the central place among the "trees" in this "garden". The other "tree", "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil", also existed.

What is the symbolic significance of these "trees"? Trees are often used figuratively in Scripture. A tree is a living, growing thing, drawing its nourishment from the soil in which it is planted and bearing fruit in its season according to its nature. Its fruit carries seed which reproduces life according to the nature of the tree, bringing increase. (Cf. *Psa. 1; Jer. 17:8; Matt. 7:17-20; Dan. 4:10-15; Rom. 11:17-21, 24*). Christ likened Himself to the vine and His disciples to the branches (*Jn. 15:5*).

The "trees" which God caused to grow out of the "ground"

GOD'S PROVISION FOR MAN ON EARTH



In the "east" (place of light, worship)
God planted a garden of two kinds
of "trees" produced from the "ground"
(material realm).

There was every kind of "tree" that man required :



1. Full Provision for Man's Intellectual Needs.

"Every tree that is pleasant to the sight (intellect -
cf. Gen. 3:5-7; 1 Jn. 2:16)

For the intellectual needs of man was provided all
kinds of knowledge, sciences, art, music, literature, etc.



2. Full Provision for Man's Material Needs.

"Every tree..... good for food" (physical needs -
cf. Gen. 3:6; 1 Jn. 2:16)

For the material needs of man was provision for
food, clothing, housing, with necessary industries, etc.

TWO OTHER TREES - Not from the "ground."



The Tree of Life - The principle of true life in God
ruled by perfect love. Ruled all man's activities be-
fore the fall. Under it everything was "very good".



The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil -
The principle governing Satan's life, ruled by self-
love. Under it all man's activities, good in themselves,
became blighted with death-bringing evil.

are described as of two classes—"every tree that is pleasant (to be desired) to the sight (appearance) and good for food" (cf. Gen. 3:6). These evidently represent the complete provision, product of the natural realm, which God had made for man's soul and body. The material realm supplied man with all that his body required for its well-being: food, raiment, housing, etc. It provided also the interests and activities necessary for the soul's well-being and happiness. The "trees" would include all the arts, crafts, sciences and pursuits beneficial to man; all that contributes beauty, usefulness, and pleasure, making a full provision, so far as the material realm is concerned, for the three faculties of his soul—mind, emotions and will. And man was permitted to partake freely of all these "trees".

But all this was in the place of communion with God, dependent upon the "tree of life" which gave it true life. It should be noted that the "trees" did not supply wisdom. That came from God through the Spirit; it was not a product of the material realm. Nor was there any provision among them for man's spirit.

The full significance of these figures will be more clearly understood when a comparison is made with Gen. 3:6, where Eve, after her heart is corrupted and she has rejected the provision of these "trees" as governed by the "tree of life", sees the key to both wisdom and life in the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil". This we shall consider later.

Not Primitive Beings

It must be remembered that Adam and Eve were not primitive beings in the dawn of civilization. They are not the primitive man of the theory of Evolution. They are man and woman in their perfect state as created by God, perfect in spirit, soul and body. Their intellectual powers were at their highest capacity, and they were fully equipped with understanding. Adam was capable of undertaking the stupendous task of classifying and naming all living things.

Those who study the functioning of man's brain tell us today that less than half of one per cent of its potential capacity is being used. To what extent this most wonderful and delicate of all instruments was impaired by the fall we do not know, but there is much reason to believe that the effect upon it was great.

There is no ground for concluding that Adam and Eve were ignorant of all the arts and crafts and without knowledge of the sciences (represented as we have seen by the "trees") but every reason to believe that they already possessed the knowledge,

taught them of God, that was necessary for a life of full achievement in the task of subduing the earth and exercising dominion over it—knowledge no doubt far beyond that which man has today. Adam's immediate descendants, during his lifetime, are spoken of as engaging in agriculture, live stock breeding, city building, music and metal working, although now it was not under the principle of the tree of life, but under that of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the spirit of evil is manifest in it all.

There is ample evidence of the fact that fallen man lost knowledge that he previously possessed. Primitive peoples today are not so because they are less advanced along the road of Evolution but as the result of decadence caused by spiritual darkness. Modern investigators find that the mental equipment and capacity of even the most primitive man is equal to that of the most civilized. The language structure and the arts and crafts of primitive peoples can be explained satisfactorily only on the ground that they are remnants of a high civilization. Heathen religions bear clear evidence of the fact that they are corruptions of a one-time true knowledge of God. The findings of modern ethnological and archaeological research demonstrate that man originally believed in one God, the Creator of all things, holy in character, and that polytheism, idolatry, witchcraft and animism were subsequent corruptions to which his religious ideas have always tended. Striking evidence of this is provided even by the Christian religion, for whenever true contact with the Spirit of God has been lost the same corruptions have appeared, as can be seen in the drift of Roman Catholicism through the centuries towards superstition, polytheism and idolatry in its worship of Mary and a host of saints, the use of images, and the associating of spiritual power with objects, words and actions.

The developments in man's religious conceptions provide a revealing example of the tendency to degeneration and corruption that is the natural result of the influence of the lower wisdom which he adopted when he forsook the higher, spiritual wisdom which God provided for him.

Fallen man, trusting in himself alone, in his own darkened wisdom and power, is slowly and painfully seeking knowledge. God permits him to do so. It was God's purpose that man should fully subdue the earth, but now it is by the "sweat of his brow", with great effort and difficulty, that he does so—and how imperfectly and, oftentimes, with what lack of wisdom! Some knowledge he has gained, but there is knowledge and capacity that

was possessed before that fall that man in his fallen state can never regain until he is made perfect again in Christ and all things are made new. For that day all nature waits (Rom. 8:19-23).

The Tree of Life

The "tree of life" in the midst of the "garden", but not a product of the earth, represents a governing spiritual principle. It is the principle that was central in the "garden", governing the use of all the "trees" produced by the "ground". It is the principle of true life in God's universe: the life by which man was to live. It is the life that has its source in God, drawing all its nourishment from Him, and bearing its perfect fruit. Its root is perfect love (the source of all good) and its fruit is borne for the good of all. And in its fruit is the seed that reproduces true life. Continuance of true life is dependent upon continuing to eat of that tree. In a similar sense Christ is "the living bread" and spiritual life is dependent upon eating that bread.

It was the central, controlling principle in man's life, and in the world in which he lived. All that he did was ruled by it. He was master of his will and free to partake of all that earth provided, but his freedom was not lawlessness; it was governed by the law of right — the law of perfect love.

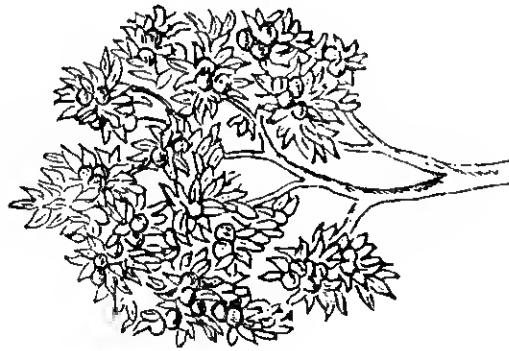
The life referred to is more than physical life; it is life in its highest, fullest and most perfect sense. Physical life is included, but it is much more than that. Man's fall brought physical death but the soul continued to be immortal. It continued to live, but its life was living death. It was not true life, complete and full, but life divorced from that which gives it true meaning, joy, power and fruit (1 Tim. 5:6).

We see this "tree of life" again in the book of Revelation, in the last chapter of the Bible. "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city (Rev. 22:1, 2, 14).

Here, God's glorious purpose consummated, we see man again partaking of the "tree of life", which God's unfailing love has guarded for him through all the intervening ages of sorrow. Now there is a "pure river of water of life", on both banks of which

Either make the Tree good and his fruit good;
or else make the Tree
corrupt and his fruit

corrupt:
for the Tree is
known by his fruit.
(Matt. 12:33)



LIFE

PERFECT LOVE



GOOD
AND
EVIL

SELF-LOVE

THE PRINCIPLE OF GOD'S NATURE

THE SUM OF ALL TRUE LAW

DESIGNED BY ALEX R. MAY

THE PRINCIPLE OF SATAN'S NATURE

LAWLESS

REJECTING THE BASIS OF TRUE LAW

DRAWN BY : H. R. RICHARD

grows the "tree of life". This river comes out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb. It is the cleansing stream provided by the substitutionary sacrifice offered by perfect love. The roots of the "tree of life", so far as man is concerned, now receive their life from that water of life. Before the fall that stream was not needed; now it is provided.

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

The other tree, the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil", also represents a principle: it is the principle upon which Satan's Cosmos is based. It is good mixed with evil (which ceases to be good and becomes entirely evil). It is good with evil at its heart; good, the motivating principle of which is evil. Its root is self-love (the source of all evil) and its fruit is borne to self-interest. In its fruit is seed which reproduces itself. The eating of this fruit—that is, the practising of this principle—inevitably produces death.

This "tree" existed and to eat its fruit was possible. God had informed man of its existence and of the nature of its fruit. He had warned him of the consequences of eating its fruit. The fact of man's free will made possible the rejection of the law of perfect love. Satan had already done so.

It was possible for man to choose to be lawless, to abuse his freedom, to misuse all the things that this world provided, applying to them the law of self-love. So doing, that which was created for his good could bring only death.

Man's Moral Condition

After describing man's habitation and the provision made for his soul and body, it is stated that Adam began his work of exercising dominion over the earth, classifying and naming every living creature. Then follows the provision of a helpmeet for the man and the institution of the family.

Lastly, the moral condition of both the man and the woman is described: "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed". Clothing, in Scripture, is frequently the symbol of a covering for unrighteousness. It is in this sense that the lack of it is intended here. Being sinless they needed no covering for sin. They had no such covering and felt no need for it as they walked in God's presence. There was no guilt consciousness in man's heart because there was no guilt. That was man's condition as he dwelt in the "garden" before the fall.

The Deceiver

While man lived in that perfect "garden", under the conditions prepared for him by the God of love, there existed the great fallen angel, Satan, or the Devil, with his corrupt and deadly philosophy of life and the unlimited ambitions of his rival throne. He now enters and the title used for him is "the Serpent". It is one of his symbolic titles, descriptive of his character in his fallen state, for in his beauty is deception and in his wisdom death.

"Now", continues the record, "the serpent (*nachash*—shining one), was more subtle (wise—with corrupted wisdom, Ezek. 28:17) than any beast of the field (living being) which the Lord God had made".

This is not "a" serpent, but "the Serpent". That the Serpent is Satan himself is stated in Rev. 12:9 and 20:2, where also he is identified as the one who "deceives the world and beguiles man"—"that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan". This is confirmed in 2 Cor. 11:3, 14. Devil means accuser; Satan means adversary. These two titles, combined with the symbolic title, the Serpent, fully describe his character in his dealings with God and man. It should be noted that nowhere does it say that Satan took the form of a serpent, or entered into a serpent, or appeared as a serpent. We must be careful not to read into Scripture what is not there.

The contrasting symbolic title used for our Lord is "the Lamb"—the sacrifice without blemish (Rev. 5:6, 12:6; 1:22; Jn. 1:29). The Holy Spirit is called fire—burning all impurity (Gen. 3:24). He is also a Dove, in His gentleness, descending from above. The Word of God is the Sword—cleaving between the soulish and the spiritual (Gen. 3:24).

Satan's Question

"And he saith unto the woman..." "He", Satan, is in communication with man. Choosing the woman, he presents his wisdom as opposed to God's wisdom. As "the shining one", "an angel of light" offering light, he reasons with her in the "garden", just as later he reasoned with Christ in the desert, and by his false wisdom and beauty Eve is fascinated and deceived.

Satan's characteristic is deception. He himself is deceived and his purpose is to deceive.

His approach to Eve and her response to his arguments are outlined. It must be remembered that Eve was a highly intelligent

woman. Satan begins with consummate subtlety distorting and falsifying the law that God had laid down: "Yea, hath God said (is it true that God hath said), Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" God had not said so and both Satan and Eve know it. But Eve understood what Satan meant. In what Satan said there is the familiar note of the gently derisive superior wisdom of the man of the world in his approach to the Christian, "Come now, you are living a very restricted life, has God forbidden you all the personal pleasure and profit that there is in the world?"

Satan was not just crudely misquoting or exaggerating God's command; he was carrying it to what he argues is its logical conclusion. His meaning is that, while God had said she could eat freely of every tree, He so restricted the eating that it actually amounted to a prohibition. His inference is that she ought to have liberty to try everything and use everything as she wished, without the restriction of the principle of the "tree of life" and that God had deprived her unjustly of that freedom.

According to Satan's philosophy, man was not freely eating of the "trees". In telling him not to eat the fruit of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil", God was depriving him of the free and full use of all the "trees" and preventing him from getting real pleasure and benefit from all the things of life.

Is that not Satan's argument to the unbeliever today—and also to the unspiritual believer? He reasons that to obey God's law is to be enslaved and deprived of freedom, pleasure, gain and all that is worth while in this life. A young girl from a Christian home who had fallen into sin told us, "A friend advised me to go out into the world and have fun". She did, and her life is in a tangle that she cannot unravel and only God can overrule.

Eve's Answer

Thus Satan drew Eve out to express what he evidently saw was already germinating in her heart. She answered, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die".

There are several significant things in her answer. She did not yet quite go all the way with Satan. She did not fully admit that she was completely prohibited from eating the fruit of all the trees but she agreed with his premise. She left out the word "freely", showing her willingness to acknowledge that liberty to enjoy them was restricted. Then she spoke of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" as the one in "the midst of the

garden"—occupying the central and ruling position. This reveals the importance which the forbidden "tree" was beginning to take in her thinking. Now to her it was that "tree", not the "tree of life", that was the key to life in the "garden". Moreover, referring to God's prohibition against that "tree", she added, "neither shall ye touch it" and, in place of "thou shalt surely die", she substituted, "lest ye die". The exaggeration of the prohibition by adding, "neither shall ye touch it", reveals resentment against such a complete prohibition. It is as though she said, "We cannot even touch it; we are not allowed to try it; we are not permitted any exercise of discretion, any liberty of choice in the matter. We cannot have even a little innocent pleasure and profit from it".

Does not the believer, when he becomes carnal, demand liberty to enjoy the things of the world, saying, "Cannot I know how far to go and when to stop; can I not choose the good and leave the bad?"

The softening of "surely die" to "lest ye die", evidences a readiness to believe that death would not necessarily be the result—but that, indeed, the fruit of that "tree" might add something to life.

Here again, does not the carnal believer argue, "It will do me no harm; am I not wise enough to enjoy the pleasure and avoid the harm?"

Her answer clearly shows a heart already affected, a mind beginning to be darkened. It is evident that there was no longer in her heart the perfect fulfilment of the "first and greatest commandment". Perfect love for God with its perfect confidence in, and understanding of Him and His law had gone.

One in that condition has a completely different outlook. The spiritual man is entirely satisfied to let his partaking of the fruit of the "trees" that this world produces be governed by the law of spiritual life. He desires that it be so. He feels no restraint to his freedom but realizes that he is truly free to enjoy all the things of this life and benefit fully from them. But when his heart becomes cold toward God and self-love occupies the throne, he begins to hanker after a liberty which means the misuse of that which God provided for good. Beauty, art, music, the sciences and all material things are given man for good, but all can be misused and degraded. They were made to bring life, but when used by the heart ruled by the law of self, they become the tools of unrighteousness and bring death.

Eve had come to the place where she was no longer satisfied

with true freedom. She no longer recognized it as true freedom. Self was striving for the liberty of lawlessness. The self-loving heart and mind were hankering after the forbidden fruit; they were grasping at the Throne.

Had Eve not been in that condition Satan would have had no entrance into her heart and mind for she would have spurned immediately his insinuations against God's love and integrity and would have despised his reasoning. She would have scorned his philosophy and hated his sin and met him with God's true Word and with perfect love and confidence toward God as did Christ later in the desert.

Satan's Accusation Against God

Discerning her condition, Satan now continues boldly, expressing definitely what he saw were the doubts and desires of her heart (knowing that nothing seems so reasonable and true as that which one wishes to hear). He said, "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as God (Elohim—the Creator) knowing good and evil". You will not die but will become as God.

Here Satan goes much further than in his first attack. He lays aside all reserve and uses clear language presenting his argument fully and boldly. He makes God a liar and a selfish deceiver. The False Accuser would prove that God is not the God of perfect love but guilty of the sin of self-love. He charges Him with deliberately deceiving man and depriving him of that which is his right and with doing so for His own selfish purpose. Thus he accuses Him of selfishness, falseness, injustice.

He pictures God's heart as like unto his own, attributing to Him motives and purposes similar to his own. Is it not always so with a corrupted heart and mind? Can self-love understand or believe the purity of perfect love's heart? Does it not always slander the motives of perfect love? Did it not do so with Christ?

Satan appeals to self-love's lawless and unbridled pride and ambition: "Ye shall be as God (Elohim—the Creator)", he said, "knowing good and evil". The knowledge of "good and evil" would complete their knowledge and experience and make them as God the Creator, for, Satan said, God Himself knows good and evil.

Satan, who knew evil, accused God of knowing evil. He told man that God was unjust and not the God of perfect love; that the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would

give him God's knowledge and make him as the Creator.

He offered man freedom from law, independence of God, equality with God, and life. He asserted that freedom from law and the partaking of the forbidden fruit would not bring death, but would give fulness of life.

Fallen Man

Eve was deceived and convinced and accepted all this. Adam accepted it also—and since then it has been the basis of all man's reasoning and actions. Even the carnal religious man—the Rationalist—believes in the inherent goodness of man and in "the imminence of God in man". Man thinks of himself as a Creator, capable, without God, of ultimately creating all things—of creating good, the perfect life, the perfect world, and finally, life itself. In what Satan offered to Eve we see the germ from which has developed the whole philosophy of man and the condition of the world as it is today.

This position, accepted by Eve, meant rebellion against the authority of God and the rejection of all that God is. Involved in it is the breaking of the two fundamental laws—perfect love to God and to one's neighbour. As the whole moral law is bound up with these, it meant the complete rejection and breaking of the whole moral law.

The moral law governs man's behaviour in all circumstances. It is the application and manifestation of the two fundamental laws. Whenever it ceases, even to the slightest degree, to be that, it ceases to be moral and becomes immoral.

The Satanic principle of self-love, with self-interest as its motive, is, in its very nature, contrary to the two fundamental laws, and, therefore, to the whole moral law. It is, therefore, immoral. Having adopted this principle and put it into practice, Eve's moral guilt was complete. Satan is "the lawless one", and she, like him, by rejecting true law, became lawless.

Eve was now completely changed. Here "eyes were opened", as Satan had said they would be, and she "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes and a tree to be desired to make one wise" (act wisely). Then she acted. Heart and mind convinced and corrupted, "she taketh of its fruit and eateth" (Young). Then she "giveth also to her husband with her and he doth eat" (Young). This is not the doing of one act of one sin, but the beginning of a continued act of continued sin, she "taketh" and "eateth", she "giveth" and he "doth eat". And that taking and eating continues until this day. They "be-

came vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Rom. 1:21, 22, etc.). They had embarked upon a life of sin.

This statement in Gen. 3:6 must be compared with that in 2:9. God had made "every tree desirable for appearance (full provision for the soul) and good for food" (full provision for the body), (Young), and He had set as the principle governing their use the "tree of life". But now Eve rejects that principle and sees the key to a more desirable and complete provision in the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil". That tree now became the desirable thing to provide everything she wanted in life for soul and body. In it she saw, with her newly gained vision, not only everything "pleasant to the eyes and good for food", but something more—that which was "desirable to make one wise" (wise in action). She would now be able to build her life with a new-found wisdom.

The knowledge of good and evil had a three-fold attraction:

(1) There was an appeal to the body—in food, drink, raiment, fleshly desires: "the lust of the flesh" (1 John 2:15, 16).

(2) There was an appeal to the eyes (to the soul)—"the lust of the eyes", through pleasure and gain in all the arts and crafts, in commerce, government, and in religion, used or misused for self's benefit and glory. (Compare the corrupted political economy and commercialism and defiled sanctuary of Satan pictured in Ezekiel 28:15, 18).

(3) It gave a desirable wisdom by which to order life. Before, wisdom had come from God through the Spirit—the wisdom of the "tree of life", rooted in perfect love. The new wisdom was not from God. It was the wisdom of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil", rooted in self-love and it appealed to the heart and mind in which self-love had taken root. It was "the pride of life" (1 Jn. 2:15, 16). "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual (soulish), devilish". It was the "darkened" wisdom of Satan, the "philosophies" of men, the proud "reasonings" that set themselves up against the knowledge of God (Cf. Col. 2:8; 2 Cor. 10:4, 5, Weymouth; Jas. 3:10-18).

When perfect love to God had ruled Eve's heart, the fruit had not seemed attractive but hateful. Her judgment had been true—"The spiritual man judges all things truly" (1 Cor. 2:15, Conybeare). But now her wisdom is corrupted and the fruit seems wholly good. This was natural. To one who walks with God and judges with true wisdom, sin is hateful, but when that one strays from God it becomes attractive. "The natural (soulish) man

rejects the teaching of God's Spirit, for to him it is folly" (1 Cor. 2:14; cf. 2 Cor. 11:3).

How long the process of the temptation took, we do not know. Satan reasoned with Eve and she considered his arguments. She contemplated the forbidden fruit and came to the conclusion that it was desirable. Then she made the decision and commenced to partake of it. Following that came the process of Adam's temptation and his decision to partake also. There is nothing unfamiliar in the process. In every detail it follows the course of all temptation to sin.

Having partaken of sin they became identified with it. The sinner who sins becomes identified with his sin.

Conscience

Now the eyes of Adam and Eve are opened to another thing: "they know that they are naked". A sense of guilt enters into their hearts and they know that they are sinners, impure, culpable, and that there is nothing to cover their sin from the eyes of a holy God. The confidence of innocence gives place to the shame and fear of guilt.

Does not one who has deeply wronged a friend feel ashamed in his presence—yea, and even come to hate him?

Before the fall, man's moral condition was such that he needed no covering for sin. He had no sin and walked in the presence of a holy God without any sense of shame or condemnation. But now his moral condition is completely changed. Sin exists and must be covered. He has no covering and knows he needs one. Man is now guilt conscious.

Their conscience accused them. Sin is fundamentally wrong and there can be no true reason or excuse for it. It is contrary to the basic principle of the nature God gave man. Man, although his will is free, is made in the image of God with perfect love as the basic principle of his nature and there is still in him an instinctive sense that sin is wrong.

The conscience, therefore, has its roots in the nature which God gave to man. It is significant that in the Old Testament conscience is usually expressed by the term 'heart'. Sin has its roots in the heart. It is the heart that is outraged, and it is there the consciousness of sin has its roots.

The conscience may become hardened; it may be "seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim. 4:2); but it is always there, and has always been there, deep in man's heart. Back as far as modern investigators have been able to go, in the records of the earliest

civilizations, it is found that man had as definite a knowledge of the great moral laws as he has today. And in our own experience we have found that savage Indian tribes are not ignorant of them.

Good Works

When the sinner's conscience troubles him he tries to do something that will give an appearance of goodness and assuage his conscience. In one way or another he seeks to find excuses for the sin he is doing. Adam and Eve attempted to cover their guilt by good works: "They sewed fig leaves together and made them aprons" (or girdles, a partial covering)—a garment of righteousness made by themselves.

But fig leaves are useless for the making of a garment. They appear large and strong and suitable but wither almost immediately. They become shrunken, twisted, shapeless and brittle in a few hours, quicker than many other leaves. Such a garment would not last a day. Moreover, there is a substance in fig leaves that is hurtful to the skin. They are rough and irritating and would make a most uncomfortable garment to wear. Nor are good works comfortable or healthful to the flesh. They are irksome and bring no true satisfaction.

The apron of fig leaves, an impossible garment, inadequate in size and of unserviceable material, speaks of the utter uselessness of man's efforts to justify himself. When first wrought, man's good works look well and make the sinner feel good, but almost immediately their false glory fades, for it is only self-glory that they give. The guilt has not been covered, the accusing voice of conscience has been only momentarily stilled. The guilt-consciousness remains deep in the heart.

God Seeks Man

A significant change now takes place in the title used for God. Until now it has been Elohim, the Almighty Creator, who has spoken. From now on, it is Jehovah Elohim, the Redeemer God, who speaks. God's relationship to man has changed, as also man's relationship to God.

"And they heard the voice (sound) of the Lord God (Jehovah Elohim) walking in the garden in the cool (wind or spirit) of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God, among the trees of the garden." Among these "trees" (occupied with the things produced by the material realm, its provisions for soul and body, its pursuits, activities and

pleasures, used by the light of their new wisdom) they sought, as man does today, to shut God out. Previously they had walked among these "trees" in communion with God, but now they sought in them their own selfish purpose. But God was there. The sinner cannot hide from God.

Man is still hiding from God. The unbelieving scientist with his hypothesis postulating the non-existence of God seeks to satisfy his mind and heart that there is no God. The manner in which he will stake his faith upon theories that he knows will most certainly have to be modified later when further knowledge is gained, and often fails to see the inconsistencies of his reasoning, are evidence of it. The abuse and scorn that he will often direct against those who believe in God is clearly an endeavour to shout down the voice of God which he cannot silence. Others seek to flee from God in business, politics, pleasures, good works, morality, or in abandonment to sin. But there is nowhere in God's creation where man may hide from the voice of the Redeemer God (Ps. 139:7-12; Rom. 1:18-23).

God sought out Adam and Eve. It is the law of perfect love. Christ taught that the one who is sinned against must seek the one who has sinned against him. It is what Christ Himself did.

God's Questions

What God says to man is of great importance. He is now the Judge and it is in that capacity that He acts. First He examines guilty man. He does not reproach him or make any accusation against him. He just asks him three questions:

(1) "Where art thou?" This gave Adam the opportunity to defend himself.

Man, who had been walking in free and happy fellowship with God, had cut himself off from Him. So God asks him, "Where are you?" It is a question full of meaning. It is as if one sought out a dear friend and companion who had suddenly withdrawn and asked him, Where have you been? And yet it is much more than that. It faced Adam and Eve with the whole situation in which they were now placed.

Adam could not avoid the truth. He answered, "I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself". He admitted that he was hiding deliberately from God and that the reason was fear caused by guilt that he could not cover. He does not even mention his garment of good works (fig leaves). When he was face to face with God it was useless as a covering for his sin.

(2) Now God asks him a second question, as searching as the first. It probes the reason Adam had given. "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" Who told you that you are guilty and that there is no cover for your sin?

Adam makes no answer. He is silent. No one told him; in his own heart he knew it; his own conscience accused him. He stood self-condemned and without excuse.

(3) Then God asks him the third and final question, "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?" That question also is important. It throws the responsibility entirely upon Adam. Had he done that which he had been commanded not to do, the consequences of which he had been told? He could not plead ignorance: he knew what he was doing, he knew it was wrong and what the consequence would be.

Adam admits that he has done so; he says, "The woman whom Thou didst place with me—she hath given to me of the tree—and I do eat" (Young). He does not plead ignorance, nor does he attempt to plead good works. He admits, not the doing of one sin, but that he is sinning. But he does seek to justify himself. He presumes to throw the responsibility upon God, saying "The woman Thou gavest to be with me . . ." He infers that God is to blame for having made the woman who tempted him.

To this God made no reply. It was not worthy of one.

Adam's admission of guilt was complete. Thus by three questions, God, the Righteous Judge, revealed Adam as a self-confessed, wilful sinner without excuse and entirely responsible for his sin.

God now turns to Eve and asks her but one question: "What is this that thou hast done?" Eve admits that she is sinning but makes a similar attempt at justification; she places the blame upon Satan: "The serpent hath caused me to forget—and I do eat" (Young).

Again God makes no reply.

During this questioning there has been no sign of repentance or sorrow for sin on the part of either Adam or Eve. They fear the presence of God because of their guilt, they admit their guilt but their hearts are still set upon the way they have chosen. They do not say, as the returning Prodigal did, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son". They make excuses and attempt to throw the blame on others.

Today man's condition is exactly the same. He still seeks to

place the blame upon God or Satan. The unbeliever usually blames God; the believer blames Satan. But neither excuse is true; man is personally and entirely responsible for his actions.

God did not question Satan. Satan previously had been judged and condemned.

The Consequences

Jehovah God now makes a pronouncement to each of the three participants in this great tragedy. He is not yet passing judgment, but stating to each one clearly what the consequence of their sin will be—consequences of which He had warned man fully.

In each case it is perfect love that speaks. It is against God that man has sinned, yet, while there is the absolute truth and justice of perfect holiness, there is no demanding of personal satisfaction. Love is deeply moved and its sorrow is great. But faith and hope—the children of love—bring a light of glory and triumph upon the scene so that justice and truth have no despair and death is swallowed up in victory.

Satan's Future

Satan is addressed first. He is the great fallen angel into whose heart self-love entered and who wished to sit in the seat of God, and now, so far as the earth and man are concerned, he has succeeded. He looks forward to a career of success and to personal glory.

But God tells him, "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field (living creature); upon thy belly thou shalt go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel".

God, of course, is not speaking to a serpent but to the Serpent, as is perfectly clear. A snake does not eat dust, but, figuratively, the Serpent does. The enmity is not between the woman and a snake nor between her seed and a snake's seed. God is speaking to Satan, and He uses figures of speech still well known in the East. To "go upon the belly" (prostration) means to suffer humiliation. To "eat dust" all the days of his life means the complete defeat of every plan and effort through all the time that was to follow. His seeming victory would but reveal him as the most degraded of all created beings.

This was not an arbitrary punishment meted out to Satan; it was a statement concerning his future. He had persuaded man to

accept his corrupt philosophy of life and to reject God's order and rebel against His sovereignty. Having gained the heart and mind of man whom God had placed upon the earth as ruler, Satan became now, in effect, the "prince" and "god" of this Cosmos.

But God tells him what his conquest will bring to him. He will become accursed more than the lowest of living beings. He will not reap glory but humiliation. He will not succeed in his purposes, but every scheme that he will undertake will suffer complete defeat continually. Then, finally, "the seed" of the woman—of the woman he had deceived—would appear to end his power and destroy him. Christ would come, God's true image and likeness, born of a woman, to fulfil the law in His life and in His death upon the Cross and provide a perfect sacrifice for man's redemption.

Christ became the "brazen serpent". Brass speaks of judgment and the serpent of the Serpent's nature which man acquired. Christ took upon Himself man's sin and bore his judgment.

Christ has fulfilled God's statement to Satan and we have witnessed the great conflict in which Satan availed himself of every recourse through the self-ruled heart of man to destroy the Son of God as Christ fulfilled in the flesh the law of perfect love. We have watched Satan tempt Christ in the desert as he tempted Eve in the garden. He sought in Him as he had sought in her, some manifestation of self-love, offering Him the kingdoms of this Cosmos and the glory of them, if He would but accept his lordship. Then we have beheld the glory of perfect love's triumph as, "The hostile princes and rulers He shook off from Himself, and boldly displayed them as His conquests, when by the Cross He triumphed over them" (Col. 2:15, Weymouth).

God said that all Satan's plans to thwart God's purpose for man and to build his own empire would end in failure and humiliation. This result is not a punishment imposed upon Satan; it is the natural and inevitable consequence of his sin. As we have seen, God says the same thing of Satan, using another figure, in Ezekiel 28:18, "Therefore I will bring a fire from the midst of thee; it shall devour thee..." Inherent in the principle governing Satan's heart is that which will inevitably bring destruction. Sin brings death.

Eve's Future

God turns from Satan to Eve. She also looked for personal satisfaction and gain in her sphere, which is the home, through

the false freedom, wisdom, life and equality with God obtained from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. She thought to build for herself. But God says to her, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee".

This is not an arbitrary sentence. God tells Eve what the consequence of the way she has chosen will be to her in her sphere, the home. The effect would be three-fold:

(1) She would be affected physically. The pain of childbirth is a natural result of the physical effect of sin.

(2) Sorrow would enter into that in which there should be only joy—the bringing of children into the world. In her relation to her children joy would be mixed with sorrow, for they would inherit her fallen nature and cause her sorrow.

(3) In the home the law of perfect love would no longer rule. The headship of the husband, which, before the fall, had been exercised in accordance with the law of perfect love, would now be based on the law of self-love. Instead of the freedom for self that she sought, her desire (based upon her self-love) would be subject to his desire (based upon his self-love). Having adopted the law of self-love she would be ruled by it and would suffer the sorrows it brings.

The rule of her husband would be undesirable to her not just because it would now be imperfect, but because of her new-born unwillingness to accept any authority but her own. Her unwillingness to accept authority is shared equally by her husband, but it affects her particularly in the home.

It is significant that in the New Testament the counsel stressed to Christian wives is, "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord".

In the Christian home the law of perfect love is restored, both in the relation of the husband to the wife and the wife to the husband (Eph. 5:22, 23). The headship of the husband is likened to the self-sacrificing headship of Christ over His Church, and the attitude of the wife to her husband is likened to the self-sacrificing obedience of the Church to Christ.

It was in the home, in her relationship to her husband, at the central point of her ministry, that Eve's failure manifested itself. Instead of being a true helpmeet, she tempted to that which was wrong.

It is with reference to this failure and its consequences, and on the basis of the order which God instituted, and the statement

He made to Eve, that Paul wrote, "A woman I do not suffer to teach nor to rule a husband, but to be in quietness (of a quiet, submissive spirit) for Adam was first formed, then Eve, and Adam was not deceived (first), but the woman, having been deceived, into transgression came, and she shall be saved through the child-bearing" (through giving birth to Christ). (1 Tim. 2:12-15, Young's lit. trans.).

God's statement to Eve has been misinterpreted by some. God did not say that woman would be subject to man. He spoke only of the relationship of the wife to her husband, who is head of the home.

The headship of the husband is not a consequence of sin, though the present manner of the headship is. Not being now under the headship of God it will manifest the Satanic principle and bring sorrow. The properly exercised headship of the husband in the home is necessary to the woman's well-being and to the success of her special ministry in the home. Under it, she can reach her highest attainment.

The principle of headship and government is seen as essential in the economy of all God's universe. It is a headship that does not interfere with true individual liberty but maintains principles and order. It creates and ensures the condition in which true personal liberty can be manifested. God established it among men. It is necessary for well-being, that there may be order resulting in attainment, through efficient co-operation on the part of all. The headship of God over the universe must be maintained or chaos would immediately develop. Man's rejection of God's headship to establish his own brought disaster, throwing his world into deadly confusion.

God established headship and government in the home, in the Old Testament priesthood and among His people Israel. When there is the true exercise and acknowledgment of this headship in the home, order and happiness are created. When a Judge ruled in Israel, all went well; but when there was no Judge disorder and weakness reigned.

In the Church the gift of the Spirit for government is provided and obedience to those who rule in the Church (and also in human government) is commanded. In the missionary company seen in the New Testament, Paul was the leader.

The headship of the husband does not make the wife an inferior. In the congregation all are equally "priests unto God" and the fact that some have the gift of government to rule as

Elders does not mean that the other "priests unto God" are inferiors. True government by the Elders makes possible the true and free exercise of the gifts of the Spirit by all the members. True government in the home produces like results.

The man's work was to till the earth, to subdue it and to rule over every living creature. The woman's work was to be to him "a helper—as his counterpart" in all this great work. Without her as his "helper-counterpart" the man could not fulfil his work. God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help-meet for him". So He made the woman for the man. This is emphasized in the New Testament: "Neither was the man created for the woman but the woman for the man" (1 Cor. 11:8, 9). With her qualities, which God has given her to be the helper-counterpart of man, she can take a place in all the affairs of man which no man can fill.

For that reason, it is stated, the man would cleave unto his wife and the two would be one flesh. Each is specially endowed by God for the task which they are to undertake unitedly. The one is the complement of the other. For either to seek to take the other's place would bring confusion, loss and sorrow.

The headship of the husband in the home, necessary for order and efficient co-operation, is witnessed to throughout all Scripture, but the thought that woman in general is subject to man is foreign to its teaching. She is not commanded to be in obedience to man. If she were the consequences would be serious. The wife is to be in obedience to her husband and to no one else.

Much of the misunderstanding has arisen from a mistaken interpretation of Paul's statements regarding women in 1 Cor. 14:34, 35 and 1 Tim. 2. It is not realized by some that he is referring to married women in relation to their husbands, not to women in general. He refers to the "law" as teaching what he taught. The law taught what God said to Eve. To make Paul say that the woman is to be subject to man in general is to make him teach contrary to the law and contrary to God's statement. It would make the woman man's inferior, which God does not do. The woman, because she is a woman, is not more subject to God, to Christ, to the Church, to the Elders—or to man—than man is. The wife is spoken of as "the weaker vessel", requiring protection and consideration on the part of the husband, but she is equally a "priest unto God", before Whom there is neither male nor female.

The mistaken interpretation has led to a wrong evaluation of the woman's position, particularly in spiritual ministry,

restricting seriously the witness she is intended to give. In the Church also she is man's "helper-counterpart", taking an essential part in its testimony. There also "It is not good that the man should be alone". The woman's part in ministry is necessary to complete that of the man.

Adam's Future

Finally, God speaks to Adam. Adam looked forward to glory, success and power in his sphere through the liberty, wisdom, life and equality with God he believed he had gained through the new knowledge. Considering himself a Creator, he thought to build for himself by his own wisdom and strength. But God said to him, "Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and dost eat of the tree, concerning which I charged thee, saying, 'Thou dost not eat of it'; cursed is the ground on thine account, in sorrow dost thou eat of it all the days of thy life; and thorns and bramble it doth bring forth to thee; and thou hast eaten the herb of the field; by the sweat of thy face thou dost eat bread, till thy return unto the ground; for out of it thou hast been taken: for dust thou art and unto dust thou returnest back" (Young).

This also is not an arbitrary punishment; it is the consequence of sin. Adam's culpability is increased by the fact that he had "hearkened" to the voice of his wife when she advised him to do what he knew was wrong. Eve was the first to sin, tempted directly by Satan, but Adam failed to exercise his responsibility of headship in his own home. It is interesting to compare this with the requirement for an Elder in the Church, who must know how to govern well his own house, for, otherwise, "how could he govern the Church?"—and whose wife and children must also be giving a true testimony. At this key point of his headship Adam failed.

Man's sphere was that of exercising dominion over all the earth and all living things in it. God tells him the result of sin upon him in that sphere. As a consequence of the sin of its Head in the adoption and application of the law of self-love, all nature came under the curse of that law (Cf. Rom. 8:19-23). As a result, man's labour would be hard and he would reap with sorrow. All he obtained he would have to wrest from nature by the sweat of his brow. All would be the fruit of "good and evil" and it would produce "good and evil". The ground would bring forth bramble and weeds as well as good grain. The fruit of his toil would be full of imperfection. Joy would be mixed with sorrow, gain with loss. And all his striving and building and

gathering in this life would end in nothing as physical death claimed his body and returned it to the earth from which it came and all material possessions had to be left behind. Having sought to gain the material world for himself, he would lose it (Matt. 16:24; 26). Having chosen to live by the law of self-love he would have to contend with it and reap its deadly fruit. God had said it would bring forth death, and so it would be.

Thus God tells the three actors in this scene exactly what the consequence of their action will be to themselves. Each had sought gain for self and each would reap utter loss for self with sorrow. Each looked forward to building great things for self upon the foundation they had laid, to reaping personal advantage and joy from the law of self-love. But God stated clearly that whatever is built on such a foundation can never reap true gain and joy and must end in bitterness and death.

And so it has been in all Satan's efforts as the usurper god and prince of this Cosmos, in all woman's work in her building of life through the home, and in all man's striving to subdue the earth and govern it that it might be a perfect habitation for himself and for all nature.

Eve's Posterity

"And Adam called his wife's name Eve (Heb.—life, or life-source) because she was the mother of all living" (v. 20).

Not only are Adam and Eve affected personally by the action they have taken, but the race which they would produce would partake of their life. The law which they had adopted, they had introduced into their natures, into their home and into all nature which they governed.

In two senses Eve would be the mother of all living. She would be the mother of all who would follow her. Of her life—of the life with the seed of death which she now had, and of her fallen nature—they would all partake. But also from her, born of a woman, would come the One whom God had promised, in Whom is life and through Whom life would be restored to the redeemed.

A Garment Provided

The Righteous Judge has revealed man's guilt and has made clear to him the personal consequences of the position he has taken. But the Judge is also the Redeemer God. So now, before proceeding further to the inevitable executing of judgment, He

provides a way by which man can avail himself immediately of the promised expiation, which He, the Judge, has undertaken to make for him.

Jehovah God provides a garment to clothe man's "nakedness" (that is, his sinfulness, which he had sought in vain to cover with his own garment of good works). "And Jehovah God doth make to the man and to his wife coats of skin, and doth clothe them" (Young). These "coats", made by God, as compared with the "aprons" or "girdles" made by man, symbolize a garment adequate in size to clothe the whole man and made of a material that is satisfactory and durable.

Here again it is not just one act that is referred to, but the beginning of something that continued—He "doth make . . . and doth clothe them". He began (for it was just a beginning that was to be completed at the Cross) providing a garment of righteousness that would cover sin (cf. Rev. 3:18; 19:8), a covering made from animals whose life was given to provide it. He taught sinful man to offer a symbolic sacrifice by which he could acknowledge his sin, his need for a substitute and his faith in and acceptance of God's promise to provide such a Substitute; a symbolic sacrifice which would continue to be accepted until the coming of the One whose sacrifice-offering would atone once and for all for man's sin and provide an eternal garment of righteousness.

The Case Against Man

Now, having made every provision possible for man, Jehovah God, the Righteous Judge, prior to passing judgment sums up the case against man in a public declaration before the Universe. And the Lord God said, "Behold the man is become as one of Us to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and live forever . . ." Here God is not saying that man has become like Him through the knowledge of good and evil. The statement is a blend of irony and pathos. God is describing the situation now actually existing, the position that has been taken by man. It is a declaration of the greatest importance.

God is not speaking to Adam and Eve alone; He is addressing the Universe, giving the ground for the action He must take in regard to man. He states the position man has taken, the reasons which guided man to take that position, the condition he is in and the objective he is now pursuing. The statement might be paraphrased thus: "Behold, man has now set himself up as

equal with God the Trinity, thinking in his darkened wisdom that he has attained this through the wisdom he has found in the knowledge of good and evil. He thinks that through this wisdom he can put forth his hand and possess himself of life and establish himself forever—which he cannot do; and now..." Thus God declares the fact that man has accepted the things Satan had offered—wisdom, liberty, equality with the Creator, and life through the knowledge of good and evil — and that his life is now based upon them.

God's statement ends abruptly, the sentence unfinished, expressing thus two things: first, the unspeakable sorrow in His heart as He is obliged to state man's condition and purpose and the action that must be taken; and, second, the fact that what must be done is so evident and inevitable that it does not need to be stated.

The situation that God describes is as follows:

(1) Man now considers himself a Creator, equal with God, as Satan persuaded him to believe. This is the result of man's corrupted wisdom, the fruit of his partaking of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil". This is now man's condition and henceforth God will have to deal with him upon this ground. Previously, man had been sinless and all God's dealings with him were based upon that fact. But now the situation is completely changed; God has to deal with rebel man.

(2) Man, in this condition, plans to put forth his hand and grasp the tree of life and live forever. For Satan had said that sin would not bring death and man believed it. He thinks he is able and worthy, by his own power, wisdom and self-righteous works, to continue in all the benefits of the "garden" and of the tree of life. He intends to do all this through the principle of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil". Through this knowledge, he believes he can have true life and reap all the fruits of true life and establish himself forever.

Judgment Executed

Jehovah God, the Righteous Judge, is left no choice in the action He must take regarding man whom He had created and whom He loves. There can be no communion between light and darkness. The holy God must separate Himself from sinful man. The prodigal son in rebellion had left the Father's house and the Father had to let him go. Sinning man had to be "delivered over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh" (2 Cor. 6:14-17; 1 Cor. 5:5). There could be no alternative.

"Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. So he drove out the man". Man's loss was great; how great we can only surmise. The "garden" which God had prepared for him derived its perfection from the principle of the "tree of life" and the full communion with God. Now the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" cast its blight upon every "tree" and upon the "ground" from which they grew.

Man had withdrawn from God and, because of man's sin, God had withdrawn Himself from man and from man's earth. Henceforth there is a veil between God and man. This was now Satan's domain through man's choice. No greater disaster could have befallen man or the earth than God's withdrawal from them, for to both, He and His presence are essential. God has not withdrawn in the sense that He has relinquished His sovereignty, or abandoned that which is His, but He has withdrawn His presence in companionship and co-operation with that which has the blight of Satan's order. To that extent, therefore, man and nature continue henceforth on their way without God.

Man's separation from God brought far-reaching consequences affecting his whole being. His mental and physical welfare was dependent upon his relationship to God. When he "walked with God" in the perfect fellowship of love, no fear or anxiety of any kind clouded his life. These great scourges of fallen man, fear, anxiety, worry, which rob him of happiness and health, were unknown. There was absolute security.

Oneness with God is essential to man. He is a tripartite being, spirit, soul and body. When he became dead spiritually, through this separation from God, life inevitably became for him what it is now—full of frustration, imperfection, sickness and death.

"In a paper presented to The Institute of Living on January 14, 1948, by Dr. Walter Freeman and Dr. James W. Watts, of the Department of Neurology and Neurological Surgery of George Washington University, Washington, D.C., this statement will be found: 'The most elevated form of consciousness of the self is self-realization as a child of God. The feeling of oneness with God indicates the development of a spiritual life with its culmination in ecstasy'. The term 'ecstasy' means to the author 'utmost happiness'. This is spiritual and mental health.'"¹

Our Lord's prayer to the Father for His people in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel was for the actual manifestation

¹ The Secret of Mental Health—Brillinger.

of this oneness with God, which has now been re-established in the redeemed (John 17:20-23, 26). It was the object of His coming to earth and His redemptive work. All Scripture bears testimony that this is man's fundamental need. The goal and summary of the New Testament message is, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

In man's fallen state the purpose of God for him could not be carried out, nor could he co-operate with God in the carrying out of God's work. Nor did man desire it. He was now incapable of understanding God's purposes, and had independent and entirely distinct purposes of his own which he intended to carry out. Considering himself self-sufficient, he wished to busy himself with the pursuits and pleasures of this life, shutting God out as he built for self.

As the centuries and millenniums have passed, man has laboured and built, reaped and lost, advanced and retrogressed. Painfully, through death and sorrow, he has learned some of earth's great secrets, which he has used for good and evil, which have brought him good and evil, life and death, a blessing and a curse. But how far he is from that perfect state of knowledge and dominion which he lost!

Love's Provision

Following God's declaration and His separation from man and from man's world, we are told of a place prepared by God where He and man could always meet, and of the way that was to be kept open for man throughout all his generations that he might have access to the "tree of life": "And He placed at the east of the garden of Eden, Cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way to the tree of life" (Cf. Rev. 22:1, 2, 14).

The meaning of this is clear. Again the "east" speaks of the place of light—of true knowledge and communion with God. It is within the "garden", but at its border. Man could not dwell in the "garden" but he could come up to its border and meet God there. The Cherubims are associated with the Throne of God and His covenant of mercy with man. In Ex. 25:18-22, the Mercy Seat covering the Ark in which the Covenant was kept and the two Cherubims covering the Mercy Seat with their wings typify the same thought.

The sword is the Word of God: the Word He had spoken, the promise He had given of a Saviour who would bring salvation to man and defeat and death to Satan (Heb. 4:12; Eph. 6:17). The

flame is the Holy Spirit of cleansing. The way is Christ, the promised Sacrifice.

The Sword of the Spirit "turned every way". God's promise was a complete protection. It could never be made void. Nothing could ever prevent the coming of the promised Christ, "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the Cosmos". No attack, no matter from what direction it might come, could prevail; the way would continue open by which man could return to the tree of life; for the sword was there to secure the way, not to close it.

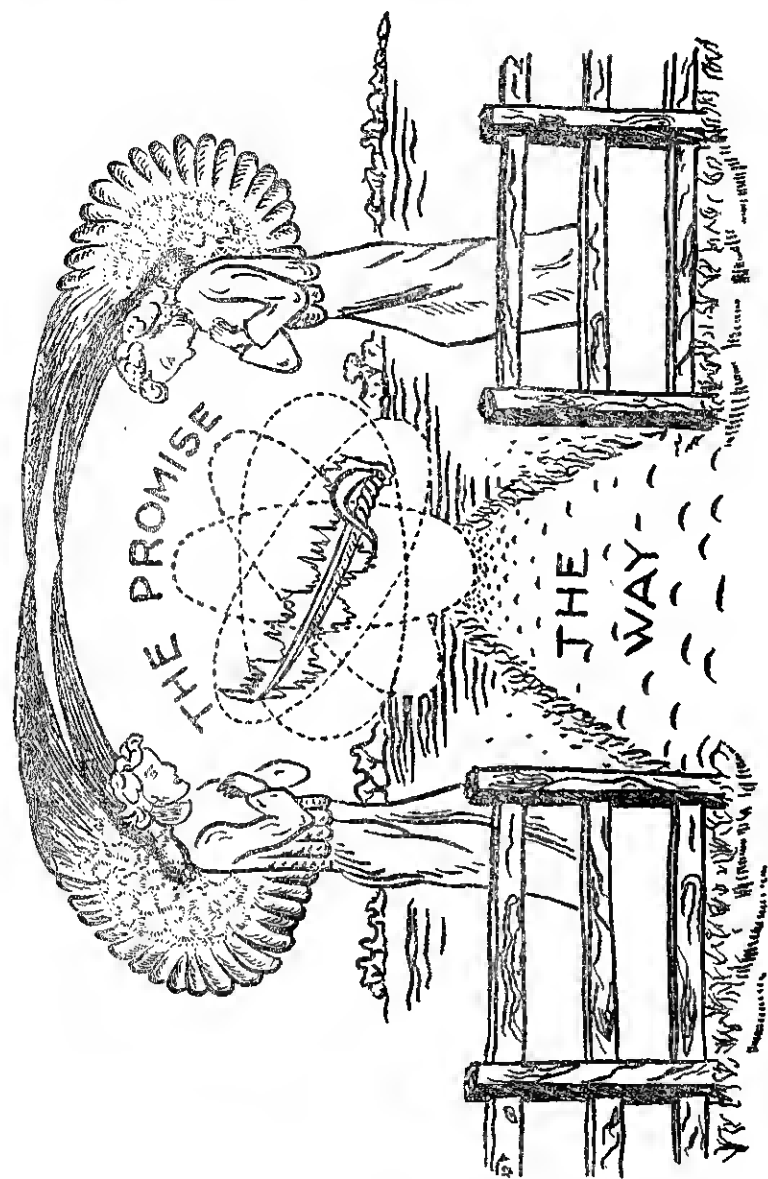
Because of the certainty of its fulfilment, the promise was immediately available, and from that day, man looking forward to Christ, began to enter by that way through faith and to partake of the "tree of life", as Abel did and multitudes after him, just as we do today, looking back to the Sacrifice already offered.

The Word of God does not bar man from the tree of life, it keeps the way open for him. But it does exclude sin: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). Man may return to the tree of life, but the "sword" which keeps the way open for him will divide between that which is of his fallen soul and that which is of the Spirit, penetrating deeply, discerning all things and cutting away all that is of sin and death: "For there shall in no wise enter in any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they that are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27). The flaming sword that opened the way to Abel closed it to Cain.

Later in Scripture other terms are used to designate the two principles represented by the two "trees"—the soul and the Spirit; the flesh and the Spirit; the law of sin and death and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. And the "two-edged sword" continues to cut between and separate the two.

How Love Makes War

"Love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth" (1 Cor. 13:7, 8). The eternal, unconquerable faith and hope of the God of love is manifested in the midst of this disastrous victory of Satan over man. There can be no acceptance of defeat. Man has fallen, but he will be redeemed. It will be a costly work, for it will demand

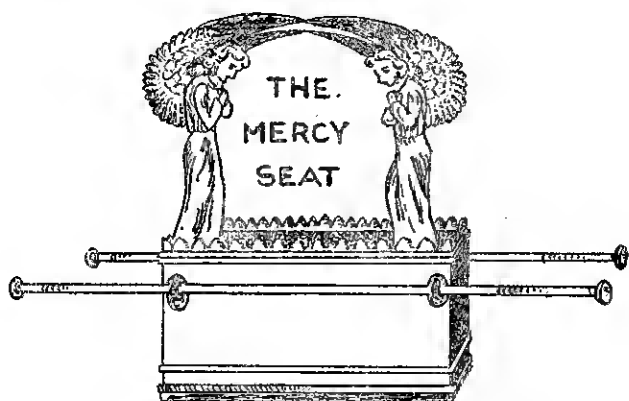


DESIGNED BY:

ALEX. R. HAY

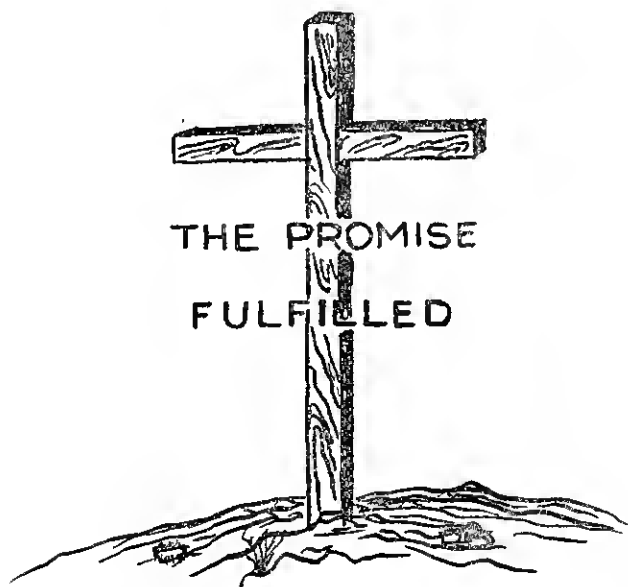
DRAWN BY:

H. R. PRICHARD



THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

Designed by: Alex.R.Hay



Drawn by: H.R.Prichard

love's utmost sacrifice. It will take long, and it will demand love's utmost patience.

God could have destroyed the earth, man and Satan, but that would not have served love's purpose. Man had to be permitted to continue in his rebellion and Satan in his conquest—for a time. As man has followed Satan by choice, Satan must be left to rule him, but only as an instrument of love's purpose, until the day when judgment shall be fulfilled upon him.

As man's repentance must be voluntary and real, God must wait. So He prepares the open Way and waits. The work must be accomplished by love. Force cannot do it. Chastisement cannot drive sin out of man's heart. God's life must enter in again. But it can enter only when received. Man must become willing. The Father of the prodigal must wait. Sin would bring death, but by the open Way man could return to life. And so the God of perfect love—"The Lord mighty in battle"—set His forces for the conflict of the ages, the battle for man's soul.

And He still waits, for "HE, after He had offered one sacrifice for sin, for ever sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. For by one offering He hath perfected for ever the purification of them whom He sanctifieth. For . . . This is the second covenant that I will make with them after these days, saith the Lord, I will give my laws upon their hearts, and write them upon their minds", and "their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more" (Heb. 10:12-17, Conybeare).

The victory that the God of love has planned is not a partial one. It is not just the redemption of man, but the ultimate presenting of the redeemed, perfect in love, before His presence in glory. The broken image must be perfectly restored. To that, in the faith of love and in the omnipotence of love, He has predestined them. "In Christ" He has "chosen us . . . before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace" (Eph. 1:4-6).

So those who enter by the open Way to the "tree of life" are destined by God's immutable word and purpose to be re-formed into the image and likeness of the God of perfect love.

Cain and Abel

After the fall man began to offer worship to God. Both Cain

and Abel do so. Cain goes clothed in an "apron of fig leaves" which he had made. Abel availed himself of the "coat" which God had made for him.

As God had taught, Abel brought a sacrifice, "The firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof", acknowledging thereby his guilt and need for the promised Substitute. By faith he looked forward to Christ, accepting His sacrifice. He went to the place where God was to be found and entered by the "way" prepared to the "tree of life".

"Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord". He offered the fruit of his own labour, the work of fallen man, produced by the ground which, because of him, carried a blight upon it. There was no acknowledgment of guilt, no trusting in the promised Saviour but an implicit despising and rejection of Him. Cain, with a proud heart and self-righteousness, took the position that he was fit and able to produce an offering of works worthy to be received by God. His worship was based upon Satan's principle, self-love.

God accepted Abel's sacrifice but rejected Cain's. This offended and angered Cain, so God spoke to him, facing him with the fact that the blame rested entirely upon him: "And Jehovah saith unto Cain, 'Why hast thou displeasure? and why hast thy countenance fallen? Is there not, if thou dost well, acceptance? and if thou dost not well, at the opening a sin-offering is crouching, and unto thee its desire, and thou rulest over it' (Gen. 4:6, 7, Young). The meaning of this statement is plain. If he did right his conscience would witness to it, he would have acceptance and would be happy. If he did wrong the Sacrificial Lamb that was promised lay waiting (at the "breach" where sin has entered) to meet his need. The desire and purpose of that Sacrifice was for his justification, but the responsibility was his, because he had the power to accept it or reject it.

This is an important declaration. In His previous declaration God had stated the reason for His separation from sinful man. Now He makes clear the responsibility of the sinner henceforth in regard to the Sacrifice for sin that is provided.

God had, by His three questions to Adam, shown man to be a self-confessed sinner hiding from Him in fear because of sin. And He had prepared a garment to cover man's sin. Now man must act, accepting or rejecting. There will be those who reject and the full responsibility lies upon them.

Cain rejected. He refused to take the way to the "tree of life" opened by the sacrifice of the Substitute, so his sin remained

upon him. The "tree of life" was barred to him by the Sword of the Spirit which laid bare his sin and he alone was responsible.

In Cain's heart self-love reigned. He did not love God with all his heart. Not fulfilling that first commandment he did not fulfil the second either and, naturally, there sprang up in his heart a hatred of his brother who was righteous. Whatever was unfavourable to self was hateful. Abel's righteousness condemned him. Then self-love bore its ultimate fruit and Cain slew Abel. What is unfavourable to self must be destroyed and self-love finds its own justification for it. Cain said, "Am I my brother's keeper?", manifesting his rejection of the law of love. Like Satan, Cain was lawless. True law was rejected and the law of self-love ruled.

These two types of worship, that of Abel and that of Cain, have continued through the succeeding years to be offered to God by man. Cain was not an atheist, he was a worshipper, but his worship was soulish, with self-love in its heart. It was wholly evil and an abomination to God. It brought no acceptance, no pardon, no joy. It only served to manifest more clearly the sin that ruled the heart. It was Cain, the soulish worshipper, who slew Abel. And it was the soulish, self-righteous worshipper who crucified Christ.

CHAPTER IV

GOOD AND EVIL

What happened at the fall was that pure love died in man's heart. Man and Satan did not desire to destroy love; nor did they wish to lose love's fruits. All that they intended to do, and all that they did, was to place self in the centre of love. On that ground they thought to improve love's fruits and to garner them for self. They claim that love still exists. But with self in its heart love dies.

Man continues to have a capacity for love. Created in God's image and likeness, with love as the basic principle of his being, it is still the fundamental necessity for his well-being. Even in nature this is so, and in the midst of much that is heartless there is a capacity for affection, kindness and faithfulness. We are told that there is no species of wild animal that is not capable of being tamed in response to affection, or of manifesting affection in return.

Love does exist, but it is not perfect love. It is love based upon the principle of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In it there is good but in it there is also evil. The love of a husband for his wife is real, but in it there is selfishness. The love of a wife for her husband is real, but it is not without selfishness. Even in the love of a mother for her child, great as it is, there is selfishness. Despite all the good, the evil is there and it brings death. The heart of fallen man is now incapable of that which is the basic essential of his well-being.

Motivating Sources

We have seen that God is love and that every work that He has wrought has love as its foundation and purpose. Scripture reveals that there is but one motivating source in the universe. The basis of all wisdom and all law, the one principle of active life, and of all action is love.

But there are two kinds of love: true love and its counterfeit: perfect love and self-love. Self-love is fallen love, corrupted love, the negation of true love, based upon principles completely contrary to it. So utterly different are the natures and objectives of the two that there can be no understanding or tolerance between them. The one is perfectly pure; the other entirely impure.

These two kinds of love are the motivating sources of all

The Tree of Life

Fruit of the Two Trees That Appears Identical but is Not.

PURE GOLD

It is Good and Pure
Within it Carries the Seed of Life

Love - Entirely unselfish, self-sacrificing.
Unfailing, just, pure.

Joy - Entirely unselfish, pure.

Giving to Poor - Motivated by and done
according to principles of
pure love, the right hand not
knowing what the left is doing.

Praying - From a heart yielded in
perfect love to God.

Humility - A true lack of self-seeking and
self-centeredness in the heart.

Self-sacrifice - Done for the true good of
another with no thought of
self-glory or gain.

The Forbidden Tree

GILDED

It is Evil and Corrupt
Within it Carries the Seed of Death

Love - At its foundation is self-interest.
Unstable, unjust, unwise, limited by
self-interest.

Joy - Based upon self-satisfaction over
some gain for self

Giving to Poor - To gain glory for self before
men

Praying - To be seen of men. With a
proud heart like the pharisee's.

Humility - For praise of men and self -
praise.

Self-sacrifice - Done for some self-glory
or gain.

The Reader Can Add Many Other Fruits to this List.
Whether the "good" is good or bad depends upon
the root from which it springs.

Whoever has, deep at its root, self-love, can never be good.

thoughts, desires, words, actions, plans and works. The one is the fountain of all good; from the other emanates all evil.

These two motivating sources are presented figuratively as two fruit-bearing "trees", the fruit of the one giving life, the fruit of the other bringing death. These "trees" are depicted as in the midst of the "garden": central and basic in all the activities and pursuits of man's life. They bear fruit that appears to be identical. Both appear to bear the fruits of love—joy, pleasure, freedom, satisfaction, good works, attainment, happiness. Both offer man fulness of life. However, while the fruit of the one is pure gold, the fruit of the other is but gilded; in its heart is corruption. The one is good; the other "good and evil".

The Character of Good

Neither man nor Satan wished to abolish good; it was what God called good—what perfect love judged to be good—that they wished to abolish. They wished to establish their own criterion of what is good. They rejected perfect love as the source of all good and substituted self-interest, which is self-love. That did two things: it changed the character of good and altered the basis upon which good is judged.

Good that has self-love at its root can never be the same as good that is the fruit of true love. God calls it "good and evil", an evil mixture. That which in itself is pure is made impure. That which is beautiful is made false. Into that which should produce good is introduced a deadly poison. Our Lord gave examples of this. He taught that giving to the poor is good, but He condemned it as evil when done to win the praise of men. He taught men to pray to God but said that when done to be seen of men it was hypocrisy (Matt. 6:8, 16-18).

The selfish motive makes entirely evil that which in itself is good. It completely changes its nature. The fact is that true good depends entirely upon the motivating principle from which it springs. Every act partakes of the nature of that which produces it. That which seems great is made evil and valueless and that which seems insignificant is made good and of great value. Christ made this very clear. He said that the giving of a cup of water in His Name to one who is His, because he is His, will not go without reward. The gift which in itself has hardly any intrinsic value is transformed by the motive into a thing beyond price; the offering which was only the simplest courtesy becomes an act of fellowship with the Lord Himself.

Not only does the motivating principle change the character

of the "good" that is done, but it affects the judgment as to what is good. When self-love has the final word, that which true love judges to be good will be regarded as inconvenient and, therefore, not good, and that which true love regards as evil will be considered convenient and, therefore, good. In the final issue, good, to self-love, is always that which is regarded as convenient to self.

When our Lord spoke of the Cross that awaited Him, Peter protested, "pity thyself" (think of your own interest). But Christ rebuked him, characterizing his counsel as Satanic and according to the wisdom of men. What our Lord's true love counted good, Peter's self-love regarded as wrong and foolish. Personal interest was the criterion by which Peter judged; his neighbour's good was the basis of our Lord's judgment. The two principles led to opposite conclusions as to what was good. (Cf. Gal. 6:2; John 15:12; I Thes. 4:9; Rom. 13:10).

It is upon this basis that God judges all men, no matter what their appearance of goodness may be, to be sinners: "They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The Lord looked down upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ps. 14:1-3; cf. Rom. 3:9-20).

The most apparently good unredeemed man is but a whited sepulchre. Dig deep enough and it will be found that self is the motivating principle of his life. He is lawless. With all his apparent good he is disobeying the first and greatest commandment—to love God with his whole heart. The reason for his doing so is that self-love is on the throne in his heart and he refuses to yield the throne to God. The fountain of his life being corrupt he is wholly corrupt.

It will be seen that when the basis upon which good is judged is changed, the foundation upon which the moral law rests is altered. As Satan and man did not wish to abolish good, neither did they desire to abolish the moral law, but they did insist on completely changing its basis. They insist that good is still its basis, but it is good as they judge it, good with self-interest at its heart. It is, in its final issue, "every man for himself and the Devil take the hindmost". The one who succeeds feels little or no moral responsibility towards the one who does not. One individual may limit the rights of another for his own benefit. A group or class or nation may infringe upon the rights of others for their own interest. The State may deprive the individual of

his rights for its own advantage. And all claim justification for their actions—justification based upon Satan's and fallen man's conception of what is good, a conception which results in injustice and cruelty and causes untold suffering and sorrow.

Man in sin still benefits from much that is good. He lives in the midst of that which was made good and which, though now deeply affected as a consequence of his sin, still brings him great blessing. Even within him is that which God made good, though now imperfect. And above all is God's love manifested in goodness and mercy even towards the sinner. We are told that, "Your Father maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matt. 5:45); "The Lord is good to all and his tender mercies are over all his works;" "Nevertheless he left not himself without a witness in that he did good and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness". (Ps. 145:9; Acts 14:17).

All this good, man claims as his right. He seeks to use it on his own terms for his own personal benefit. But God's universe is an economy of perfect love. For that end it was created. It is not adjusted to an economy of self-love and never can be. Under the law of love it is perfect, but under the law of self-love that which was created for good can work destruction. A modern example of this is the power of the atom.

Man's Responsibility

Adam and Eve were not ignorant of the existence of evil nor of its character and effects. God had informed them regarding the existence and nature of the two "trees". They would not be ignorant of Satan's fall nor of the cause of it. The period between man's creation and fall is sometimes called the Dispensation of Innocence. This is correct in the sense that man had committed no sin and was free from guilt, but not in the sense that he was ignorant of what sin is.

God did not arbitrarily forbid man to eat the fruit of one tree just as a test of obedience. God does not trifle with man. He does not tempt man (Jas. 1:13). Nor does He treat him as a child (and the ethics of testing even a child in such a way is seriously open to question). Man's sin was not the disobeying of an arbitrary command; it was the *eating* of the *fruit* of the knowledge of good and evil.

Man did disobey a command. God, the Creator, the Head of the Creation, had a right—yea more, a duty—to give that com-

mand and it was man's duty to obey it. But the command was not arbitrary, such as one expressing the will of a dictator; it was the expression of perfect love, based upon the fundamental principle of right, having as its objective man's highest good. Therefore man's disobedience involved the rejection of the law of right and was sin.

Just what it was that Eve did, we are not told; it is of no consequence. It was not one sin; she began eating (not an isolated act, as we have seen, but a continued action) of that deadly "fruit", and Adam did likewise. They placed self-interest first and that became the ruling principle of their lives. Henceforth, at the back of all man's thought and activity was the individual seeking first his own advantage.

It was the adoption of a principle of action which meant the complete rejection of God and of all that God is. What they began to do involved the definite, considered adoption of Satan's entire philosophy; the adoption of the law of self-love and the rejection of the law of perfect love. Their sin was of the very same character as Satan's sin. The result was that, like Satan, man became "full of iniquity". His heart was entirely corrupt, his wisdom was darkened and his moral guilt was complete.

Man did this with his eyes open. He did it voluntarily and deliberately after due consideration. He had a will and was free to use it. He knew what was right and was fully responsible to do it because it was right. He allowed Satan to persuade him that God's warning was neither reasonable nor true, that God had a selfish motive, desiring to keep him in ignorance and subjection, and that he should claim his right to every experience and assert himself as master of his own life and equal with his Creator.

Man's rejection of God's order brought disorder and death as God had warned. Not only did his physical body become subject to corruption, but he became dead spiritually. His changed character made fellowship between him and God impossible. To what extent the soul suffered injury we can only surmise, but it is evident that the soul powers of man today are generally inferior to those of the perfect man as created by God. Adam, as we have seen, was capable of naming every member of every species of living things. The powers of intelligence and memory required for such a vast undertaking were, surely, far greater than those possessed by any individual man today. Imagine a man with the capacity and knowledge for exercising lordship over all the mighty forces of nature: he would be the superman. God created the superman.

Man dreams today of the superman. He believes that without God he will attain to it. He considers himself a Creator. But his striving and his conquests continue to reap only the confusion of Babel. He shall again be the truly perfect man when Christ presents him perfect in the presence of God's glory, but only then.

The corruption of man, the head of the creation upon this earth, through the introduction of the sin of self-love inevitably caused the disruption of God's order upon the whole earth. It introduced a law that was opposed to God's law. So far-reaching was the disruption, confusion and disorder that it caused that all nature came under sin's curse. In every sphere, the principle of love was replaced by the principle of self-interest. Whereas in all nature, even now, the infinite marvels of God's handiwork declare His glory, bearing testimony to the greatness of His wisdom and power, yet in all things, the fruit of the sin of self-love is in evidence: disorder, injustice, hate, cruelty, fear, suffering and death. In man himself, this is so. In his capacity to manifest love and to know and use the forces of nature, and in the marvellous structure of his body, some of the glory of God's creative work is still revealed; and yet, in the midst of it all, how profound are the marks of the fall.

Seeing the imperfection that so sadly mars the Creation, man will often ask today, Why did God create it so? He did not: it is Satan's work and man's work, the fruit of Satan's wisdom and man's wisdom. It is the spawn of self-love, not love's creation. It is Satan's "Cosmos", which God condemns as wholly evil.

GOD
THE SUPREME RULER

MAN

Ruler under God

Ruling Principle

PERFECT LOVE

Truth
Unity
Peace
Justice
Perfect knowledge
Freedom from fear
Perfect provision for
spirit, soul and body
Perfect attainment
Perfect happiness

Earth bore its
perfect fruit.
Perfection in
nature.
Physical body
and mind in
perfect state.



THE COSMOS

Ruling Principle

SELF-LOVE

Self-interest

Lawlessness
Deception
Disunity
Strife
War
Fear
Envy
Injustice
Ignorance
Cruelty
Pride
Sorrow

Earth's fruit
blighted.
Nature travelling
in pain.
Physical body
subject to
sickness and
death.

In the midst of the Cosmos but not of it
God has a People for a Testimony

MAN

The Rebel Ruler
under

SATAN

The Usurper
PRINCE AND GOD

DESIGNED BY: ALEX. R. HAY
DRAWN BY: H. R. PRICHARD

CHAPTER V

THE COSMOS

Man's fall gave Satan the control over him and through him of this world. From the day when man was created until he fell into sin, while he still loved God with all his heart, mind and strength, the earth had been ruled by the law of love. All was as God had made it and intended it to be, and man, understanding God's work and objective, lived and worked in unison with Him in a free, joyous fellowship. No self-love clouded wisdom or judgment and God's purpose of love had its perfect fulfilment. But when man's heart became corrupted with Satan's sin, the continuance of God's order was impossible. Satan's principle of self-love now dominated man's heart, and man's rule on the earth henceforth was based upon that principle.

God was forced to separate Himself from man and from that which man established. Upon the earth it was no longer God walking and working with man. Sin made that impossible. The situation, therefore, changed completely. Man was a rebel and God was the Redeemer God seeking man's redemption.

The earth became as a city that had rejected its King and his laws and chosen a rebel prince and set up a lawless form of government. The King had physical power to raze the city to the ground and to destroy its inhabitants or to force them to the obedience of slaves. But he does none of these things because his purpose is to win again the hearts of its inhabitants. He relies principally upon a small company within the city who continue faithful to him, obeying his laws and seeking to win the citizens back to him.

This analogy, of course, is imperfect, for between God and rebel man and between the King and his rebel city the issues are very different.

The Overruling Hand

God has not abdicated His throne and the law of love is still supreme. The fall of man has affected both man and nature but God continues to exercise a sovereign control over both. The history of man since the fall can have no intelligible meaning except as the hand of God is seen exercising a definite control, overruling, working to a plan that has been predetermined and pursuing an objective that is clearly defined.

This overruling control is manifested in a special way towards His people but is exercised also in a definite manner over man in general. Since Abel presented his sacrifice in acknowledgment of sin and in faith in God's promise of redemption, God has had a witness among men which He has guarded and maintained. He has protected it from being overwhelmed by Satan or man. It is an imperfect witness in which there is much of the fallen nature and God has not exempted it from persecution, using for its purification the hardness which it must face.

In the earliest writing in Scripture God's sovereign control over Satan, His care of His people and the manner in which He used Satan's work to contribute to His witness among men is declared. It is seen in Satan's complaint to God regarding the manner in which Job was protected and in the extent to which Satan was permitted to test him: "And the Adversary answereth Jehovah and saith, 'For nought is Job fearing God? Hast not Thou made a hedge for him, and for his house, and for all that he hath—round about? The work of his hands Thou hast blessed, and his substance hath spread in the land, and yet, put forth, I pray Thee, Thy hand, and strike against anything that he hath—if not: to Thy face he doth bless Thee!' And Jehovah saith unto the Adversary, 'Lo, all that he hath is in thy hand, only unto him put not forth thy hand.' And the Adversary goeth out from the presence of Jehovah" (Job. 1:9-12, Young).

God's overruling activity is seen in many ways. He raises up a Moses, a David and a Paul, a Luther, a Knox, a George Muller, a Hudson Taylor and a host of others. He restrains and uses Pharaoh and the Egyptians, the Philistines and the Romans. Nebuchadnezzar is called God's servant because he was an instrument for the punishing and preserving of God's people. Cyrus is spoken of in a similar manner because he was used to liberate and restore them. God honours righteousness and intervenes to place a limit to the evil doer that the testimony of His people be not extinguished.

Through it all God is revealing Himself to man—to His people and through them to the world. Down through the years of darkness this witness has been progressively unfolded. In the beginning God's active relation to those who would be His people is illustrated by the cherubims and the way guarded by the flaming sword at the border of the garden in Eden. Later it is symbolized by the Mercy Seat, the ark of the covenant and the Cherubims in the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. God dwells among His people but separate from

them and man's approach to Him is through the symbolic sacrifice.

After Christ's sacrifice had been made according to the promise a great advance was made. The separating veil of sin was taken away and man, born again by the Holy Spirit, who came to dwell in God's people, became a "partaker of the Divine nature". Now God manifests His glory in an "earthen vessel".

He is ever active, seeking to maintain His witness in purity. His overruling guidance of His people extends to the minutest details and to every individual, its objective always the carrying out of His purpose in each one.

To the witness of God's people in the world we shall return later. Meanwhile we shall consider the revelation which God has given to man concerning the present world system.

What God Says of the Cosmos

God has spoken clearly regarding the condition of the present world. There is a word in Scripture that the Holy Spirit uses to designate the world order that now prevails: He calls it the Cosmos. Cosmos means order; it is the opposite of chaos. We would have expected the fallen world to be called chaos, but it is not a chaos; it is organized according to a definite order. There is chaos, but that is the outcome of the nature of that order.

It is revealing to note the passages of Scripture in which the word "Cosmos" is used. There are many and they leave no doubt as to what God's thought is concerning this present world-system. We shall quote a few:

1 John 5:19: "The whole Cosmos lies in the wicked one."

Rev. 13:8: "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the Cosmos."

Matt. 4:8: "Again the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the Cosmos and the glory of them." It was the kingdoms of his world-order and their glory that Satan offered to Christ.

John 18:20: "Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the Cosmos."

John 18:36: "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this Cosmos: if my kingdom were of this Cosmos, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." It was for that reason that Christ healed the ear of the High Priest's servant which Peter had cut off. Peter acted according to the principle of this world-order.

John 16:8: "And when He is come He will reprove the Cosmos

of sin and of righteousness and of judgment... of judgment because the prince of this Cosmos is judged."

John 17:21: "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the Cosmos may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

John 17:16: "They are not of the Cosmos even as I am not of the Cosmos."

John 17:14: "I have given them Thy Word and the Cosmos hath hated them because they are not of the Cosmos, even as I am not of the Cosmos."

John 14:17: "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the Cosmos cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you."

1 Cor. 1:20: "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this Cosmos?"

John 16:33: "In the Cosmos ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the Cosmos."

1 Cor. 2:12: "Now we have received not the spirit of the Cosmos, but the Spirit which is of God."

Gal. 6:14: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the Cosmos is crucified unto me and I unto the Cosmos."

Jas. 1:27: "... to keep himself unspotted from the Cosmos."

Jas. 4:4: "Know ye not that the friendship of the Cosmos is enmity with God? whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the Cosmos is the enemy of God."

1 John 2:15-17: "Love not the Cosmos, neither the things that are in the Cosmos. If any man love the Cosmos, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the Cosmos, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the Cosmos. And the Cosmos passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

Satan's Objective

Let us consider this rebel Cosmos and some of its characteristics. God declares it to be Satanic and entirely evil. Christ rejected it and it rejected Him and crucified Him. It is made clear that any acceptance of its philosophy, any conformity to its ways, is impossible to the Godly.

The Cosmos is under Satan's rule. God acknowledged this in what He said to Satan in Eden after man had fallen into Satan's sin, and Christ declared it. But it was made clear that Satan's

rule would be attended continually by frustration, disaster and defeat.

Satan's objective in the Cosmos is evident. He claims God's Throne. He claims to rule and demands even Christ's submission to his authority: "Bow down and worship me", he said to the Lord of Glory. He is engaged in setting up his kingdom among men based upon his principles. To do so it is necessary for him to wage total war against God and all that is of God and he uses the utmost of his wisdom and attractiveness and power to destroy all that is of God's work.

The Satanic Principle

Satan's order is the expression of his character. He is lawless, rejecting the principle of true law. The basis of his order is self-love. Its governing principle is self-interest. Its motivating force is the personal ambition of self-love. Its reward is personal gain—pleasure, wealth, power and glory. These are obtained by self-assertion. God's order is the expression of His character. It sacrifices all except truth and justice for the good of another. It produces order, unity, purity, justice, truth, joy and life. Christ is the perfect manifestation of all this (Heb. 1:3). Satan's order makes all, including justice and truth, subservient to self-interest.

In the world today—the Cosmos—the basic principle governing the individual, the family, the community, the nation, is self-interest. This is considered normal and necessary. It is regarded as perfectly legitimate and justifiable for an individual, and particularly for a community or State, to consider their own interest first, even if that means permitting others to suffer. The policies of every State are dictated by self-interest. History attests that never has a State gone to war for humanity's sake. Provide for your own needs first and do so as abundantly as you possibly can; accumulate your wealth and build your barns in which to store it, and congratulate your soul and enjoy life; seek first your own pleasure, your own comfort, your own security—that is the lawless philosophy of the Cosmos.

Self-interest is the inspiring motive of the man of the Cosmos, the urge that impels him, the goal he strives for, the vision that beckons him onward. Adolph Hitler was but stating a fundamental truth when he said to Pastor Niemöller, "I believe that every human activity is directed by egoism." The basis of the world's whole economy is definitely and entirely self-love. The principles of perfect love are rejected, being considered unworkable and

undesirable. Because Christ witnessed to their truth He was crucified.

What man accumulates must be protected by force. The greater the wealth possessed by an individual or nation, the greater the danger from an envious neighbour and the greater the need for arms, police, armies, navies and air forces to provide security for the store. And the greater such power, the more is its possessor tempted to subdue and dispossess his weaker neighbour. So it is with the individual, the business and the State. "Civilized" veneers are acquired where the manifestation of this principle is held within certain limits by force, but when compulsion is removed the veneer disappears over-night and the completely selfish, lawless heart of man is revealed unchanged.

Man's Laws

Satan and man are not lawless in the sense that they have no laws but because they have rejected and broken the law of perfect love, which is the fundamental law of right and truth, the basis of all true law. Man has laws; he cannot live without them. When ruled by the law of love no other law was needed. He dreams of such a state in his present condition. But when the law of love was rejected many laws became necessary to restrain the manifestation of self-love.

On Sinai God gave a code of ten laws to man. They are based on the law of love. Because of that, simple though they seem, man cannot keep them. Having rejected the law of love, it is impossible that he keep even such primary laws derived from it. The ten commandments, therefore, reveal his sin and condemn him.

Never do man's laws fully recognize or seek to establish the law of love. Even laws that seem the same as God's laws are not the same; they have their roots in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When man orders, "Do not steal, do not kill", the motive is the protection of his own goods and himself, not love to God and his neighbour.

Man's laws only restrain self-love. They do not abolish it; they seek to regulate it. To a greater or lesser degree it is permitted to exist. In fact, as we have seen, it is given legal recognition as a necessary, fundamental and justifiable principle of man's economy. As is inevitable, the laws of the Cosmos recognize the fundamental law of the Cosmos.

This is so in the case of the individual but even more so in the case of a company or a nation. For instance, an individual

may not rob or pillage but a nation may, and for what it has gained by force it is accorded the "right" of conquest—although every law of love has been trampled under foot.

In openly Godless political philosophies the real character of man's conception of law becomes apparent. Right becomes that which best serves the interests of the State, or, more accurately, the party in power. Wrong is that which is contrary to the party's interests and philosophy. Truth is completely discarded as naive and even vicious. Whatever serves the party is true and all else is false. All this is simply the principle of the Cosmos carried to its logical and inevitable conclusion and applied without restraint.

In God's Word the need for laws and rulers to restrain the evil in the Cosmos is recognized and God's people are enjoined to render obedience where there is no conflict with His commands. But their obedience will be on the ground of love. That is, while man makes and obeys these laws on the principle of self-interest, God's people observe them on the principle of love to God and man. On the same basis the Christian may engage in the administration of these laws.

It is said of the ruler that "He beareth not the sword in vain" Punishment, even capital punishment, is necessary and good. The manifestations of sin require it and the evil-doer must be punished.

While armed might has no place in God's order, it is not unnecessary in the present lawless world-system. God's Word does not say that it is unnecessary. Where self rules, arms are necessary; it can be held in check only by force. David fought many battles. It was necessary that he do so, and God strengthened and blessed him; but because he had been a man of war, he was not chosen as the one to build God's House.

Social and Political Systems

A mere cursory review of the history of the affairs of men since the fall, and even of the prevailing currents of thought, social doctrines and political movements of the present generation, will suffice to discover their guiding principle and source of inspiration, as well as the end they pursue. It is not necessary to dig very deep to find that the pure principle of love is not the root from which they spring. There has never been in any of them an acknowledgement of the fact that the fundamental requirement for the well-being of the soul is that it fulfil its duty of love toward God, acknowledging its sin and accepting His

sovereignty. That is never recognized as the basic principle of any human doctrine or movement. They are lawless at heart. In them all, it is taken for granted that man is master of his own destiny, capable of setting his own course, of solving his own problems and surmounting every difficulty by his own wisdom and the strength of his own arm. No matter how apparently high principled, humanitarian, cultured and just they may appear to be, if we go deep enough beneath that surface we shall find that self-love, with self-interest as its object, is accepted as the ruling principle.

Hitler, as we have seen, confessedly based his policies upon the fact that all man's activity is motivated by self-interest, but, like all other human leaders, he failed to recognize that inherent in the principle of self-interest is that which must inevitably accomplish its own destruction. And no human system is free from this destructive inner "devouring fire" (Ezek. 28:18).

Hitler did not think that this manifestation of self-seeking was wrong but good. His policies were definitely and logically based upon Evolution's theory of the survival of the fittest, with its necessary continual and ruthless struggle. The light by which he guided his course was the gigantic mental fraud of Darwin's doctrine, which misinterprets and distorts the evidence of the creation and of the fall, in man and nature, by leaving the God of perfect love completely out of the picture—and for that reason appeals so strongly to the mind of man who is hiding from God. It was on this theory that Hitler logically based and justified his policies of the master race, the elimination of the Jews who might contaminate it, euthanasia and the ruthless subjugation or destruction of weaker individuals and nations. All this was to help on the good work of the survival of the best. Surely this is well expressed in Scripture as "An inward working of delusion, making them believe a lie" (2 Thess. 2:11, Conybeare).

Satan intends that his government of the world should succeed. His wisdom is darkened by his self-love and self-confidence and he does not see that the principle upon which his system is based is false and can produce nothing but death; that unity, justice and happiness can never be built upon it. Disunity, injustice and dissatisfaction are always existent, seething in their cruder forms among those who, materially, have fared the worst, but working ever as a leaven among all classes, for neither is there true satisfaction for the rich, the learned, or the powerful. No matter to what they attain, it never satisfies and they grasp for more continually, seeking, accumulating, storing and never content.

And so the Satan-guided mind of man is ever seeking a more perfect system. He will not admit that perfection is unattainable apart from God, and dreams of Utopia to be created some day by the super-man. One political system follows another as each one fails on account of the same inherent and incurable defect. Each succeeding system offers confidently the fulfilment of man's (and Satan's) dream. Autocracy offers order and strength. Democracy offers political equality. Socialism offers material equality. Communism offers social and material equality and security. Totalitarianism believes it can cure the corruption of Democracy, Socialism and Communism. And each seeks to establish itself by man's laws. But all, being based upon the same principle, manifest the same evils and share the same fate.

All claim to give to man the personal freedom, justice, equality, security and dignity which God gave him as his birthright but which was lost at the fall. The most radical social-political ideologies look ultimately for a society in which there will be no need for laws or Government and where peace and perfect social security and equality will exist. That is just what God purposed for man and what would be the natural outcome of the law of perfect love.

Satan and man see that this is ideal and desirable and they believe they can accomplish it. But the more ambitious their program the more they must trample upon the very liberties they preach as they endeavour to establish them by force. Being unable to make man's heart perfect they cannot make his ways perfect even by the most ruthless compulsion.

God, to accomplish this, changes man's heart. He says, "This is the covenant I will make with them after those days . . . I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them" (Heb. 10:16).

Satan and man will continue with their schemes. Other systems will be advocated with equal confidence, accompanied by equal, or even greater, cruelty and ruthlessness and falling into the same corruption. Internationalism will have its day. Greater leagues and confederations of nations will be resorted to in an endeavour to escape from the frightful struggles that are the outcome of conflicting interests and ambitions. The super-autocracy and totalitarianism of the Satan-man will be set up in a final attempt by Satan to rid his Cosmos of its incurable canker of chaos and give a perfect, Godless government to the world that will bring unity and order by force, but that also will end in disaster. Never can any scheme, no matter how perfect,

or any force, however great, produce the true fruits of love where self-love exists.

Reformation Impossible

The Cosmos cannot be reformed. It cannot be made good. No matter how much improvement may be brought about on the surface, the root of sin remains in the heart. Christ made no attempt to reform it. His Church is a people called out from the Cosmos. He said they were to be in it, not of it, and to keep themselves unspotted from it.

The Cosmos cannot be governed by the law of love. God does not attempt to do so. He demands as the first essential a change of heart—a heart in which “the law of the Spirit of life” dwells. Without that, nothing can be done. To engraft laws of perfect love into an economy based upon the law of self-interest is like planting a water lily in desert sand. More than that, the two are mutually antagonistic, mutually destructive. It is mixing water with fire.

For example we may take the manner in which the fruits of Socialism contradict the very ideals which it claims to pursue. One of the great difficulties in its establishment is its tendency to weaken character and create parasitism. The law of perfect love never weakens character; it strengthens, ennobles and beautifies it. Another difficulty in Socialism is that, while it aims at creating social justice and equality, it produces the opposite, accentuating class and group selfishness. Yet another difficulty is that it deprives man of personal freedom, which the law of love does not do.

The chief exponents of Communism, in their philosophy of Dialectical Materialism, unwittingly admit this. They hold that “every social development of natural good in history breeds a corresponding evil which neutralizes it”.¹ They see the results but misinterpret the cause.

Why should such weakness be evident in the midst of so much professed idealism? Because at its root is the individual seeking provision and protection for himself, not the true fulfilment of the law of perfect love toward God and man. While giving lip service to idealistic philosophies, man is really grasping at something for self. He desires his neighbour's good to the extent that it brings something for himself. His neighbour's good is definitely

¹ R. E. D. Clark,

a secondary consideration. And this attitude is considered justifiable.

A heart in which the law of self-love reigns is incapable of understanding, responding to or keeping the law of love. God has made this very evident in His dealings with men since the fall. During the Millennium Christ is to rule the nations, not with no law except the law of love, but with "a rod of iron". Yet that will not change man's heart. When Satan is loosed and the temptation comes, the nations will follow him again. Man's fallen nature cannot be beaten out of him. A new nature must be born into him.

The task that God gave the Church was not the reforming of the world or of society but the preaching of the Cross of Christ that men might become again "partakers of the Divine nature". Any other work is waste of time because it can produce no true fruit. Our Lord taught the folly of endeavouring to put a new patch on an old garment. He made no attempt to do so.

The principles, laws, philosophies, social systems and political systems of the Cosmos all have the same malady: they do not have a pure heart. They seek good but their good is corrupt. It is the good of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and it brings death.

And this is so of all man's life and works. And it is the reason why they are all evil in the sight of God whose heart is pure. All man's wisdom has this same blight. His pleasures are full of it and his joy is mixed with bitterness. The theater, the dance, the moving picture show, the card game, the cocktail party, all are of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and their heart of evil corrupts their good so that their pleasure is consumed with death.

Those who seek pleasure in these things may say that they can choose the good and leave the evil, but good with a heart of evil can never be good. It is tainted and corrupted and those who touch it will not escape its taint and corruption. God says, "The whole Cosmos lies in the evil one" (1 Jn. 5:19).

The Cosmos Today

In the days in which we live, the very foundations of the world are being shaken. Old standards and values are being discarded as inadequate. Statesmen have been seeking again to bind the hopes and loyalties of the nations to catchwords, political ideologies and platitudes. But everybody realizes that the foundations have been shaken and looks with apprehension to

the future. Mankind is suffering one of these cataclysms that have come periodically upon it. The comparative surface calm that seemed to reign in Satan's Cosmos for a time has again been shattered. Self-love has broken the artificial bounds that man had set to restrain it and has erupted in an orgy of self-seeking. Many nations have passed through untold suffering and blood, and live in fear of something more terrible.

Godless at heart and blindly insisting upon relying on its own resources, mankind is groping again for a way of salvation, of material prosperity and security. It is its own way of salvation that it seeks, not God's way. It continues to be lawless, unrepentant. It acknowledges the existence of suffering, cruelty, injustice, greed, but it is not turning to God. Like Adam, it does not acknowledge responsibility for its sin but blames God.

No matter what suffering and disaster, what disillusionment it encounters in the ways it has chosen, no matter how clear is the evidence of its failure and how often the vaunted schemes of its great ones lead it back to even greater disaster, it never learns. The scales are upon its eyes; the veil is upon its heart.

Man governs this world in his own name. He takes credit to himself for every conquest made, for every wonder he discovers in this universe which God has made. When he manages to harness a power which God has created and placed at his disposal, he glories in himself as if he were the Creator. He will even descend to the foolishness of asserting that these wonders, among which he is still but groping, came of themselves and are not the handiwork of God. He uses them and he misuses them. They offer him good but they threaten his destruction. God made them to be ruled by the law of love, but under the law of self-love, that which God made good is turned to man's destruction: instead of life it produces death.

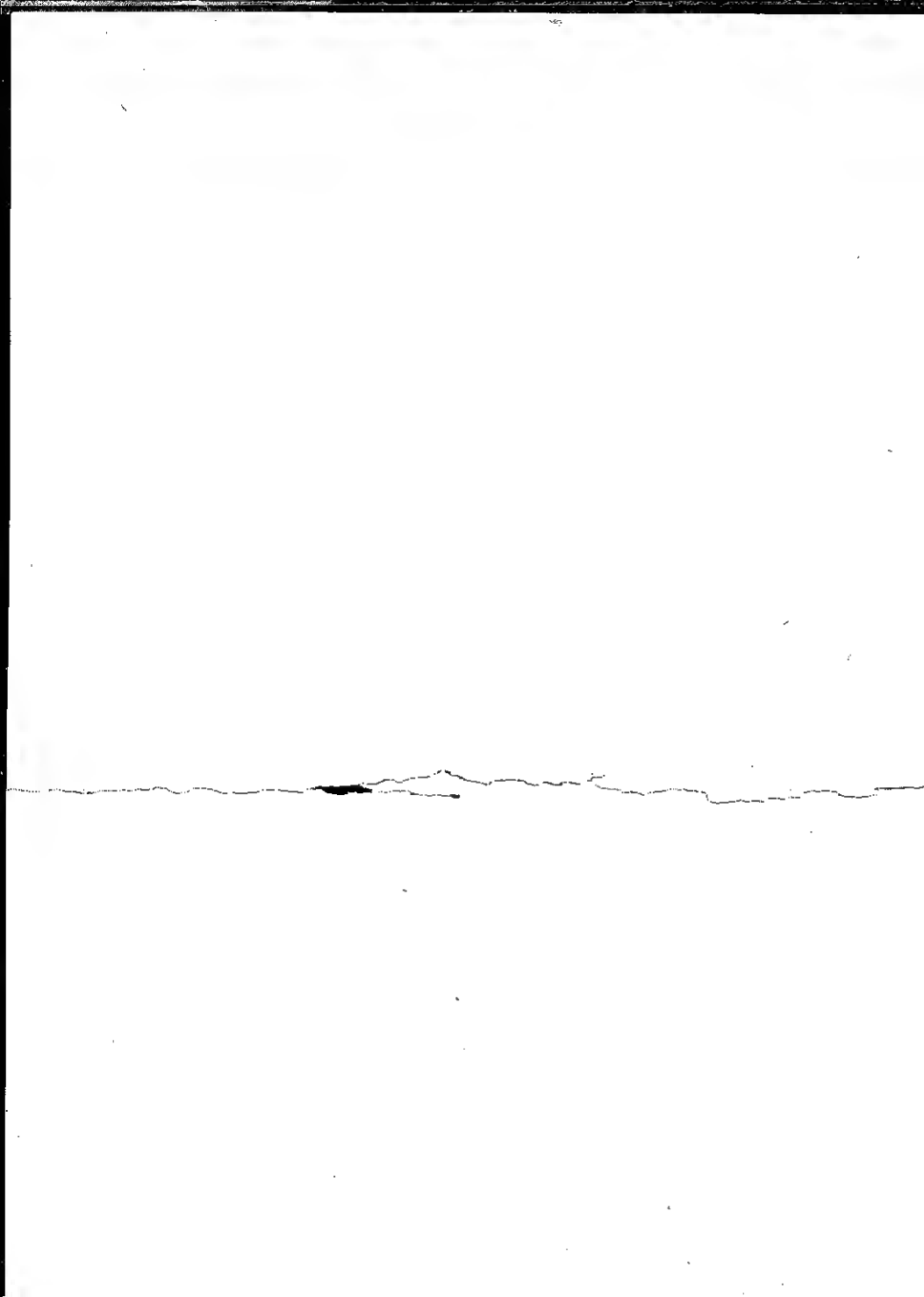
The most recent example of this is the releasing of the power of the atom, that minute and marvellous universe which reveals so much of the surpassing wisdom and power of God and of the wonder of His creation and yet which brings, as the instrument of self-love, such fear to the hearts of men. Greater and more powerful wonders will be discovered, for who can doubt that there are still treasures undreamed of in God's creation. The benefits that they can bring will be great, but under man's rebel law and darkened wisdom their power to destroy him will be equally great.

Man sees this and desperately seeks to avoid the consequences, to stake limits to the expression of his self-love that it destroy

not him and his world utterly. But even with this fear in his heart he turns not to God; he still looks to himself and to his great ones. He forms his leagues and his unions, and as soon as one Tower of Babel collapses he turns to build another.

Today we have what are called Christian nations. These are nations in which Christianity exerts an evident influence. The presence of generations of Christians has acted as purifying salt upon laws and customs. But let us not be deceived; the Christianity of such a nation is a very superficial and precarious thing. Deep down in the soulish heart the law of Satan's Cosmos is still cherished. In recent years we have seen so-called Christian nations reveal a heart in no way changed from that described by Paul in the first and third chapters of Romans. It is not an uncivilised heart, because it is highly civilised according to the most modern standards. It is not an uneducated heart, for it is highly educated. It is a carnal, lawless, Satanic heart ruled by self-love.

But this last display of the awful corruption that lies unchanged in man's heart will soon be glossed over. Man will find an excuse for it and will continue in his pride and rejection of God. It has not changed his attitude to God. Nor has it changed his attitude to himself; he still believes that he is sufficient in himself and that all he requires is a large enough combine to gain possession of Heaven itself and sit in the seat of God. By science and human learning and statesmanship, by deposing the present rulers and setting up new ones, by abandoning one way that had been labelled as perfect and affixing that label to another, he still strives to follow the Satanic will-of-the-wisp of a Paradise built by his own hand, designed by his own wisdom, ruled by his own law, reformed by his own goodness, under the shadow of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.



PART II

MAN — THE MARRED IMAGE

*"And God said, Let us make man in
our own image, after our likeness."*

— Gen. 1:26.

*"For I am fearfully and wonderfully
made."*

— Psa. 139:14.

"OUT OF THE HEART ARE THE ISSUES OF LIFE."

Prov. 4:23

"Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with all thy heart...
and thy neighbour as thyself. On these two command-
ments hang all the law and the prophets."

Luke 10:27; Matt. 22:40



**PERFECT
LOVE**

"A good man out of the
good treasure of his
heart bringeth forth
good things." Luke 6:45



**SELF
LOVE**

"An evil man out of the
evil treasure of his heart
bringeth forth that
which is evil." Luke 6:45

CHAPTER VI

THE NATURE OF MAN

God's Word reveals God to man; it also reveals man to himself. It is supremely important that man know God. It is also of the greatest importance that man come to know what God has revealed concerning man.

God is man's Creator; He knows man as none other can: "He knoweth our frame". He knows how this intricate and delicate human mechanism is fashioned, how it is adjusted, how it functions. He knows the effects that sin has had upon it. He understands our thoughts, feelings, reactions, problems, aspirations, individual differences and needs. He knows infinitely more about them than we do.

Man studies man and calls the study psychology. There is much that he has been able to discern and tabulate, but the basic facts, the inner depths, he has not been able to fathom. There are powers he does not understand, problems he cannot solve. Science has not been able to define what the human mind really is. There is not even a theory to explain thought or how consciousness is produced.

A word of warning is necessary in regard to psychology. The study of psychology is not wrong or futile. When based upon the fundamental psychological principles revealed in God's Word, it is good and useful. But, very often, the Scriptural principles are unknown to the investigator, or set aside, with the result that his conclusions are inaccurate—sometimes woefully and dangerously so.

We might cite many instances of this but shall give only one typical quotation showing how dim is man's vision as he looks at man and how little he understands even of that which he sees. A writer in a popular magazine makes the following statement:

"There's no use arguing against the existence of an unconscious mind. Modern psychology has proved its existence without reasonable doubt. Freudian theory says we have two minds."

"The conscious, thinking mind deals with reality as rationally and socially as the second, the unconscious one, will permit it. The unconscious is a selfish mind, apparently consisting largely of repressed desires and primitive instincts that say, 'To hell with reality and everybody in it!'"¹

There are sufficient grains of truth in such statements to

¹ *Gambling a Disease*, by Greer Williams, *Cosmopolitan*, March 1947.

make them appeal to those who have no further light. But what a muddled, bizarre and bopeless nightmare they present. They reduce man to the lowest possible level: a being controlled by animal drives and instincts. How false are their interpretations when brought to the clear light of the teaching of Scripture!

Modern psychology is admittedly in its infancy. Its theories of today will be modified or rejected tomorrow. Let us remember this and beware of such unscriptural terms as 'the unconscious mind', 'split personality', etc. Its light is still but a dark twilight and its 'findings' a maze to get lost in.

The subconscious mind—described above as the "selfish mind, apparently consisting largely of repressed desires and primitive instincts"—is a product of the theory of evolution. It is supposed that man is still influenced by primitive instincts that are his heritage from animal forebears—instincts, largely sexual, over which he has little control and that, for his happiness, require satisfaction.

A recent writer on this subject asserts rightly, that,

"As for the concept of the subconscious mind, which is fundamental to the Freudian principle, it may be said that there is no definite proof for the existence of the subconscious mind. Nor has its existence been demonstrated in the normal individual. The Freudian idea of a subconscious mind has been derived from a study of abnormal psychology... If there is no subconscious mind, the whole Freudian concept falls to pieces."²

The theory of "split personality" is allied to that of the "subconscious mind". Both are misinterpretations of conditions that actually exist—conditions that, in the person who is normal mentally, are manifestations of the nature acquired by man at the fall, and, in the one who is not normal mentally, are due to the results of the fall. The teaching of Scripture regarding this is dealt with in later chapters, particularly in chapter fifteen.

We would mention two psychological phenomena that have been much in evidence in modern times:

1. Social paranoia—a persecution or grandeur complex producing pride or hatred or both. Nationalism, pride of race, racial hatred are the products of mass paranoia. There are lesser manifestations of this such as class pride.

It is gratifying to self and latent in the heart in which self-love reigns. It is contrary to the law of love to one's neighbour and is a normal product of self-love, in the individual as well as in a community, natural to self-love's nature, and not an abnormal thing. It is continually present and accepted as justifiable until

² Modern Science and Christian Faith, pp. 274, 275.

it breaks the bounds set for it by man's social laws. It is considered good by those who manifest it but is resented by those it is aimed against.

2. Sadism—pleasure derived from inflicting pain or torment on animals or persons. This also is latent in fallen man's heart. A child will delight in hurting or killing insects, birds or helpless animals. When given rein this evidence of man's fallen nature produces pleasure in the torturing of enemies, the witnessing of the cruel spectacles of the Roman Arena or the modern bull fight. This is contrary to the law of love which was to govern all man's dealings with all created beings.

All such manifestations of man's fallen nature can be traced to the corrupt principle of self-love that is in his heart. All the psychological problems of the mentally normal person are, basically, spiritual problems. They are all products of a wrong relationship between soul and Spirit, between the individual and God, a relationship which becomes normal in the one who "walks in the Spirit".

In God's Word we have been given the key to understand ourselves. We may discover there a complete system of psychology and come to have a deep and accurate knowledge and understanding of man. God has not left us without light and guidance in the matter. He intends that we should know ourselves and it is our duty to seek this understanding by the guidance of the Spirit.

It is exceedingly helpful to the Christian for it enables him to understand better many things concerning his own nature and the forces which he finds battling within him. We learn the true character of our nature, the purpose for which God created it, the manner in which it has been affected by sin and the provision which He has made for its present control that it may fulfil His purpose and be an instrument of righteousness.

A Tripartite Being

Unfortunately, the teaching of Scripture on one of the most fundamental facts regarding man's nature has been obscured by a faulty translation, due, in part, to a strange and, perhaps, significant lack in the English language. While 'spirit' and 'flesh' have their corresponding adjectives—spiritual, carnal or fleshly—'soul' has no adjective. The importance of this lack can readily be seen when we realize that we can speak of spiritual things, the spiritual man, spiritual thoughts, spiritual desires, spiritual work and also of carnal things, the carnal believer, the

carnal mind, the carnal walk, but that there is no such ready medium of expression to speak of that which pertains to the soul.

The Greek adjective is 'psuchikos'. As there is no corresponding English adjective, the translators have had recourse to other words such as 'natural', 'sensual', etc.

The Greek noun is 'psuche'. 'Soul' is an adequate translation of this word. But here also the translators have used a variety of different words. Besides 'soul' which is generally used, other terms are employed, such as life, mind, heart, heartily, us and you. When we remember that 'psuche' or soul means the whole personality—mind, heart, (affections and emotions), and will—we can realize how inadequately these substitute terms express the thought. (Cf. Eph. 6:6; Col. 3:23; Eph. 1:17; Acts 14:2.) Moreover, the use of different words for that for which Scripture uses one word, hides the important fact that the passages in question have reference to one and the same thing, and thus the unity of the teaching is obscured.

Some writers have adopted the word 'soul-ish' as the adjective of soul and as it seems the most appropriate we use it in this sense in these studies. This will make it possible for us to speak of that which is soul-ish as well as of that which is spiritual.

The fact that man is a tripartite being, consisting of body, soul and spirit, is clearly taught in both the Old and the New Testaments. Throughout Scripture there is always a clear distinction made between the three. It has been suggested by some that this distinction is not always maintained in the Old Testament, but we believe that a careful study of the passages concerned makes it evident that it is.

In the King James translation of the New Testament, there are two passages that emphasize this distinction. I Thess. 5:23 reads, "... your whole spirit and soul and body ..."; Heb. 4:12 speaks of the Word of God as being "quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit..." Conybeare's translation of the latter passage is interesting: "For the Word of God liveth and worketh and is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, yea to the inward parts thereof, and judging the thoughts and imaginations of the heart".

This is perhaps the most important and revealing definition of God's Word given in the Scriptures. It tells us that God's Word (which is the expression of His thought and the revelation of His person, wisdom and will) is sharper than the keenest two-edged blade, cleaving to the deepest and most hidden recesses of

man's being, sparing nothing, to separate two things: that which is of the Spirit and that which is of the soul. The particular mention of the heart should be noted. The heart is that which finally controls the thoughts and actions of the soul.

The two-edged sword is mentioned in two other passages. In the symbolic description of our Lord as the giver of the messages to the seven churches of Asia it is said that "out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword" (Rev. 1:16). Then in the message to the church in Pergamos—in which were tolerated "the doctrine of Balaam" (compromise with the world) and "the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes" (priestly assumption)—there is the reminder that it is "He who has the sharp sword with the two edges" who speaks (Cf. Isa. 49:2). In all these cases it is the dividing of the spiritual and the soulish that is dealt with. This is the work which God's Word is to do both in the individual believer and in the Church. Other important passages, made clear by the use of the adjective 'soulish' where the Greek 'psuchikos' is employed, are the following:

"But the soulish man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14).

"These are they which separate themselves, soulish, having not the Spirit" (Jude 19).

"But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, soulish, devilish" (Jas. 3:14, 15).

"It is sown a soulish body; it is raised a spiritual body; there is a soulish body and there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15:44).

In all these instances, the context should be read to appreciate the full significance of the use of this term. When we compare these passages with those dealing with the "flesh", or that which is "carnal", (which includes both soul and body) we have the complete picture of the man who walks without the light of the Spirit of God. (See Rom. 6:12, 13; 7:18-25; 8:1-13; 12:1; 1 Cor. 1:29; 2:18; 3:1-3; 5:5; 9:27; 2 Cor. 4:7, 10, 11; 5:16; 7:1; 10:3-6; Gal. 2:20; 3:3; 5:17-24; 6:8, 12, 14; Eph. 2:1-3; Heb. 9:13; Phil. 3:13, 14; 1 Pet. 4:1-4).

As the work which God's Word is to accomplish is the separating of that which is soulish from that which is spiritual, it is of the utmost importance that the believer have a clear understanding of the difference that there is between these two. Many of God's people come more or less into an experience of this difference without understanding fully its Scriptural basis. But spiritual experience is always richer and fuller in its meaning

and more satisfying when seen clearly in the light of God's Word.

When the teaching of God's Word is understood in regard to this matter, a flood of light is thrown upon many things. It is another great key to unlock God's Word. Passages of Scripture that previously have been hard to understand become rich, clear and profound in meaning. The principles governing our inner experience, the source of our failure and weakness, the nature of the life of the Spirit which is within us, and the reasons for our spiritual conflicts—all become much more easily understood.

The Diagram

In the accompanying diagram, we have sought to present synthetically the basic teaching of Scripture regarding man as a tripartite being: body, soul and spirit. In subsequent chapters we shall consider the different points in detail, but here we shall give a brief, introductory explanation of the diagram.

1. The Body

The body is the material organism in which the spirit and soul dwell, express themselves, work and enter into contact with the surrounding material realm. It is the 'earthen vessel', 'this death-burdened body' (Rom. 7:24, Weymouth). It requires care. Its needs and appetites demand satisfaction. It is subject to weariness, pain, sickness and death.

2. The Soul

The soul is the seat of man's personality. To discern what pertains to the soul, it is helpful to consider the unbeliever, the man who, according to God's Word, is spiritually dead. Although there is no spiritual life in him, he possesses a complete equipment of mind, emotions and will. In him we see the complete soulish man.

The soul also is tripartite, having three elements:

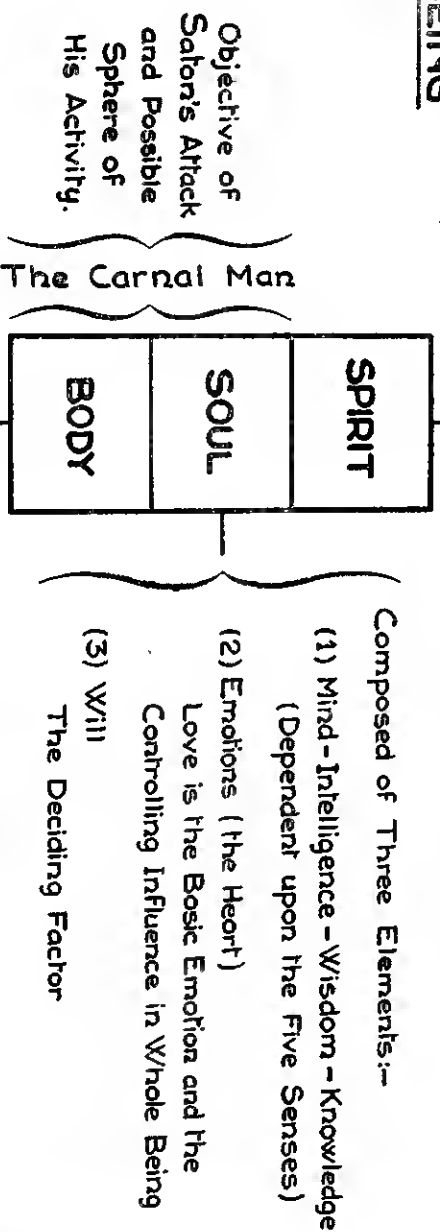
(a) **The Mind.** This is the seat of the intelligence. To it pertain the powers of thought, reason, judgment, memory. The avenues through which it obtains the information upon which it builds its knowledge are the five senses: sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste. Whatever is beyond the range of these is outside the reach of human knowledge unaided by the Spirit. They are unable to penetrate into the spiritual realm: they cannot examine, analyse, compare or judge that which is Spirit. As God's Word says, the soulish man cannot know these things. Being beyond his ken, he considers that belief in them is foolishness (1 Cor. 2:14).

GOD-SPIRITUAL SPHERE

MAN -

A TRIPARTITE

BEING



(b) **The Emotions.** The basic emotion is love. This is central in God's Being; it is central also in man's. By it, man's whole life is dominated; from it his whole life flows. By it, all things are judged, accepted or rejected. It determines his desires, actions and the whole course of his life.

Other emotions play an important part in his life, but all of these are the products of love—either of perfect love or self-love. Perfect love produces joy, happiness, peace, tenderness, pity, anger (without sin), hatred of sin. These emotions are pure. Self-love gives rise to fear, envy, hate, anger, self-pity, unhappiness, despair. It can also produce joy and happiness, but these are false and impure.

In his original, perfect state, man's emotions were pure, flowing from a fountain in which there was no impurity. After the fall, the fountain having been contaminated, the emotions were no longer pure.

Man's whole being still continues to be ruled by love, true love or fallen love. Mind and will bow to it. The mind may tell the sinner clearly that his sin is harmful and that he should exercise his will to cease from it, but if his love for his sin is strong enough it will overrule both mind and will. Finally his mind will condone it and his will decree it. On the other hand, if we love God with the whole heart there will be no difficulty with either mind or will: both will serve God. Our Lord taught that what keeps the sinner from the light and from salvation is his love of darkness (Jn. 3:19; cf. 2 Cor. 3:15, 16).

As we have seen, the basic commandment—perfect love to God and one's neighbour—is not arbitrary: it is fundamental, going to the roots of man's being and setting all things in their true place and order. It is the basis for the true co-ordination of all man's faculties, for the full and perfect expression of his being. It is the truest psychology, the fundamental of all truth.

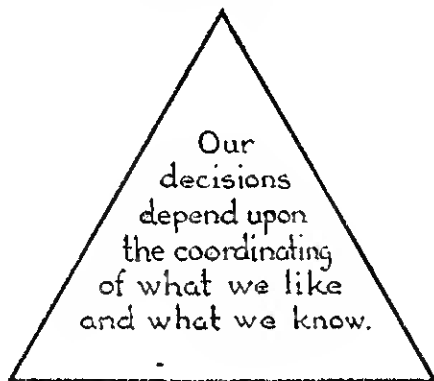
All depends upon whether love for God or love for self is strongest. From true love to God flows faith, confidence, obedience, peace, unity, hope, joy. From love to one's neighbour, flows all happiness and good. From love to self, which puts self before God and one's neighbour, comes all the world's darkness, sorrow and death.

(c) **The Will.** By his will, his power of determining, man's decisions are made. His will is his own possession, absolutely free. This makes man a free agent, personally and entirely responsible for his actions.

The will decides all man's acts, good and bad. It is influenced

THE WILL

OUR DECISIONS



**THE
HEART**

**THE
MIND**

WHAT WE LIKE

WHAT WE KNOW

But man does not love God with all his heart. His heart is corrupt. Self-love is enthroned. He does not like what God likes.

Man's knowledge is incomplete because he is spiritually dead and rejects the light of the Spirit of God.

THEREFORE MAN'S WILL IS SET TO FOLLOW THE
DARKNESS OF HIS HEART AND MIND

Designed by : A.R. Hay

Drawn by : H.R. Prichard

by his mind. His reason, based upon his knowledge, may lead him to decide to take certain actions. But the greatest influence upon his will is his heart: he wills to do what he desires to do, that is, what his love dictates. Very often in Scripture the heart is spoken of as thinking, willing, speaking and acting.

It is recognized that man's will is dependent upon the coordinating of two factors: his desires and his knowledge. This is illustrated in the accompanying diagrams. When what a man knows is satisfactory to his desires, his will will be brought into action to put it into effect. If what he knows does not accord with his desires his will will be exercised to reject it, unless, of course, he is under compulsion.

But much depends upon his interpretation of what he knows—the wisdom with which he judges it. And the influence of his desires (his heart) upon that wisdom is very great. As his heart regards a matter, emotions are brought into play which may cloud wisdom or even corrupt it.

It will be evident that in man's present state, with self-love on the throne of his heart, the influence of his heart upon his will is inevitably corrupting. Moreover, being deprived of spiritual knowledge from the Spirit through communion with God, his knowledge is incomplete and inadequate, being limited to the material. Thus the whole basis upon which his decisions are made is untrustworthy.

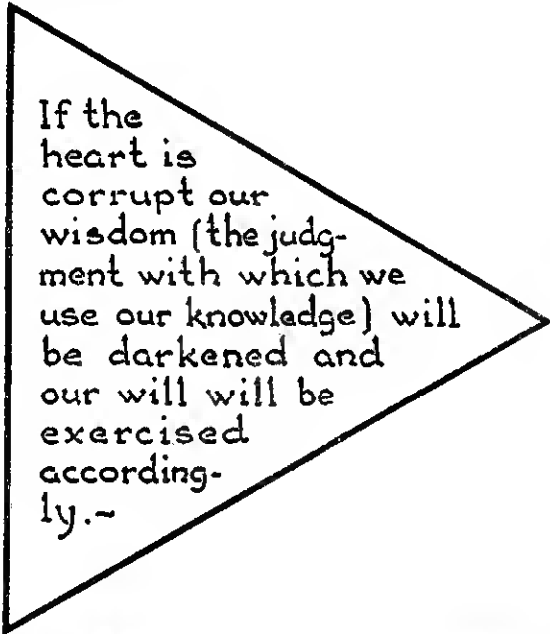
3. The Spirit

Man's spirit is of the Divine nature within him. It is capable of contact with God, of communion with God, of hearing God's voice and understanding His wisdom. It makes man complete, providing him with knowledge which the soul cannot attain. It opens to him the spiritual realm, providing him with spiritual knowledge and understanding, thus completing his knowledge and the range of his understanding and making true wisdom and judgment possible to him. As Paul writes, "The natural (soulish) man rejects the teaching of God's Spirit, for to him it is folly; and he cannot comprehend it, because it is spiritually discerned. But the spiritual man judges all things truly" 1 Cor. 2:14, 15, Conybeare).

In the fallen man, the spirit is in a state of death; not annihilated, but separated from God, the source of life. For this reason the light that is in him is darkness, lacking that which gives it true light. As the Lord said, he "must be born again". The re-born man has been made again a partaker of the Divine nature.

HEART

WHAT WE LIKE



If the heart is corrupt our wisdom (the judgment with which we use our knowledge) will be darkened and our will will be exercised accordingly.~

WILL
WHAT WE
DECIDE

WISDOM
OUR PRACTICAL
JUDGMENT

Designed by : A.R.Hay

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(2 Pet. 1:4). To him God reveals Himself. He is capable of receiving revelation from God, of knowing and understanding spiritual things. He is also capable of engaging in spiritual activity through communion with God, faith and prayer, through the indwelling Spirit of God.

The Flesh—Fleshly—Carnal

The terms 'flesh', 'fleshly', 'carnal' are used in the New Testament with reference to man as soul and body alone: man actuated by the powers of the soul and the impulses of the body alone and not by the Spirit. There are many physical influences that bear upon the soul. In this life, the soul is anchored to the body in which it dwells and there are certain definite links between the two. This is recognised in the use of the term 'carnal'. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:44, quoted on p. 89). The unconverted man is a carnal or fleshly man. The converted man is carnal or fleshly when walking according to his own heart, mind and will and not according to the Spirit.

It is the carnal man that Satan attacks. He attacks the soul through the heart, mind or body. In the unconverted man he reigns in heart, mind and will. In the converted man he seeks to do so and may for a time, partially or entirely, succeed in doing so.

The Re-born Man

Through the fall man became, to all intents and purposes, a bipartite being; soul and body only. The re-born man becomes again actively tripartite. He becomes also a man of two contending natures: spiritual and carnal. He continues to be the man he was, so far as all his natural powers are concerned. Potentially, he is just as capable of evil-doing as he was before. In his members, as Paul says, there still exists "the law of sin and death". But he is also a spiritual man, the Spirit of God dwelling in him, and, therefore, potentially capable of walking as a child of God, manifesting all the fruits of the Spirit.

The rebirth wrought by the Holy Spirit in the one who has believed is not a moral transformation. It is not a change of attitudes and desires. It is not a reformation of the erstwhile sinner—the turning of a more or less bad man into a more or less good man. The transformation and reformation take place, but they are not conversion; they are simply the evidence of conversion: its natural and inevitable fruit.

Conversion is an actual rebirth, God's Spirit has entered into

one who was spiritually dead and engendered life—spiritual life that is eternal. That one has become a “partaker of the Divine nature”, a son of God by birth.

There are many Scriptures that relate to this subject. Below we give a selection that should be studied. It is in the light of these that the chapters that follow are written. Their deep significance will be evident.

The Heart

Matt. 22:37-40; Eph. 3:17-19; Prov. 4:23; 23:7; Jer. 17:9; 24:7; Matt. 15:18-20; 23:26; Jn. 14:21, 23; Eph. 6:6; Jn. 21:17; 2 Cor. 3:14, 15; 1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Kings 3:9, 12; 14:8; 1 Cor. 16:22; 1 Chron. 12:33; Ps. 28:7; 64:6; 78:37; 119:11, 80; 139:23; Isa. 44:18-20; Jer. 49:16; Ezek. 18:31; 36:26, 27; Acts 7:51; Zech. 7:12; Matt. 5:8; 6:21; 11:29; 12:34; 15:19; 18:35; Eph. 3:17; 5:19; Heb. 4:12; 10:22; Jas. 3:14; 4:8; 1 Pet. 3:4, 15.

The Mind

2 Cor. 4:3, 4; 3:14-18; Col. 2:18; Eph. 2:3; 4:17, 23; Tit. 1:15; Rom. 8:6, 7; Heb. 8:10; 1 Cor. 2:14, 16; 2 Tim. 1:7; Jn. 16:13, 14; 1 Jn. 2:20, 27 (cf. 1 Cor. 2:15); 2 Cor. 3:5, 6; 8:12; Eph. 1:16-19; Col. 1:9; 2 Cor. 11:3; Col. 2:8, 20; 3:10; Eph. 5:17; 4:13; Phil. 2:3, 5; 4:7, 8; 3:7-10; Acts 26:9; 2 Cor. 5:16; Matt. 16:22, 23; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Prov. 14:12; Jas. 3:14-17; Isa. 26:3; 30:15; 1 Tim. 6:5; 2 Tim. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:13; 2 Pet. 3:1.

The Will

Heb. 10:7-10; Lk. 9:51; Matt. 26:38-44; Jn. 4:34; 5:30; Gal. 5:17, 25; Rom. 12:1, 2; 5:17; 6:13-16; Col. 2:23; Jn. 20:25; 1 Cor. 2:2; 7:37; 2 Cor. 8:11; Rom. 7:18; Phil. 2:13.

The Flesh

1 Cor. 3:3; Jas. 3:14-17; Rom. 6:12, 13; Jn. 3:6; 6:68; Rom. 7:18-25; 8:1-5, 8-13; 13:14; 1 Pet. 3:21; 2 Cor. 10:3-6; 1 Cor. 3:1-3; 2 Cor. 7:1, 2 Cor. 12:7-10; Gal. 3:3; 5:7-24; 6:8, 12, 14; 1 Cor. 1:26, 29; Eph. 2:1-3; 6:12; 2 Pet. 2:10, 18; 1 Jn. 2:16; Jude 23; Gal. 2:20; Col. 1:24; 2 Cor. 4:11; Jn. 8:15 (cf. 1 Cor. 2:15); 2 Cor. 5:16; 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 11:18; 1 Cor. 1:26, 29; 1 Cor. 9:27; Phil. 3:13, 14; 1 Pet. 4:1-4; Gal. 4:14; Col. 1:24; 2 Cor. 7:1; 2 Cor. 4:7, 10, 11.

The Body

Rom. 6:12; 7:23, 24; 8:2, 10, 11, 13, 23; Phil. 3:21; Rom. 12:1, 2; Jn. 2:21; 1 Cor. 6:15, 19, 20; Lk. 12:22; Heb. 10:22; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Cor. 4:7, 10, 11; 1 Cor. 9:25-27; Col. 2:23; 1 Cor. 13:3.

CHAPTER VII

THE BODY

God formed man's body from the 'dust of the earth'. Paul speaks of it as an 'earthen vessel'. It is made of the same matter that the earth is made of. It is material; earthy and earthly.

The dust of the earth is not mean and contemptible; it is a wonderful thing. It is God's creation, filled with marvels of His wisdom. In it are powers, capacities and wealth still unknown to man. Of it is the rich soil, the treasures of gold and precious stones, the beauty of the lily, the fragrance of the rose, chemical riches untold, the harvests which sustain all living things, the atom with its mighty power. Through his body made of the earth, man is kin to the world which he is to govern.

God fashioned man's body to be the dwelling-place of man's soul and spirit. It is the medium through which he contacts the surrounding material realm over which he was placed to rule; the instrument of all his endeavour and accomplishment. As formed by God, it was a worthy dwelling-place, adequate for all man's needs; a fit instrument for all his work.

It is a marvellous and intricate mechanism, the structural wonders of which man today, as we have seen, knows and understands only in part. The psalmist declared that he was "fearfully and wonderfully made". The more science discovers about man's body, the more that statement is found to be true.

When man became spiritually dead, he became separated from the source of true life—God. That separation produced cataclysmic effects upon him and, through him, upon all created things. Man's whole being, body, soul and spirit, was deeply affected by it.

One of the most evident effects is seen in the body. Physical death, accompanied by disease, pain and suffering, was an immediate and inevitable consequence.

God had made man's body perfect, free from death and disease. Just how sin produced physical death, we do not know. As we have seen, the thought that death was an arbitrary punishment decreed by God because man sinned—that God makes man die as a punishment because man disobeyed God's command—is untrue. The causes and effects of man's fall must be sought in much deeper sources.

The details of the catastrophe and its extent are revealed to us probably only in part in God's Word. The cause of it is made

clear, but by what process physical death resulted, we are not told. Nor can science explain why the physical organism after attaining full development in the adult should begin immediately to degenerate, producing, finally, old age and death. There seems to be no adequate reason why the cells that form the body should not continue with full vigour renewing the organism indefinitely. It is not that the cells become old and worn out, for they continue reproducing new cells that replace the old and renew the body. It is that degeneration enters among the succeeding generations of cells in the body until finally the complete disorganisation and death of the organism results.

It is evident that some delicate harmony has been disturbed; some vital adjustment has been thrown out of gear; some essential principle of life contravened. God did not create the body in that condition. Its full health and vigour were sustained perpetually. There was no degeneration of the organism or infirmity or death.

In man's physical body now we see not only death but, in the comparatively brief period of life between birth and death, we have evidence of much imperfection. It is now far from being a perfect organism. It is subject to many diseases, weaknesses and deformities. It is not the perfect body created by God but one that sin has sadly transformed. It is now "the body of this death" (Rom. 7:24).

It is this sin-marred organism, this body subject to death, that man perpetuates from generation to generation. Adam and Eve in their perfect state as created by God were commanded to "increase and multiply and replenish the earth." Their offspring then would have been as they were: perfect in body, soul and spirit. But after they were separated from God and from the "tree of life" by sin, and the physical organism had been marred and vitally changed so that it had become subject to corruption and death, their offspring could be physically only as they were (Gen. 5:3). Man in sin was incapable of reproducing a being perfect in body and soul. He can reproduce only his own likeness.

This was not an arbitrary punishment; it was a natural consequence. More than that: it was the inevitable result. Science is continually learning more regarding the law of heredity and its effects. It is a law that Scripture definitely recognises: "... visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me" (Ex. 20:5. Cf. Job 14:4; 21:19; Ps. 37:28; 51:5; 58:3; Jn. 3:6; Rom. 5:12).

Some scientists have seriously suggested that a thousand years from now babies may be still-born as a result of deficiencies inherited from forebears whose organism was affected by the atomic bomb explosions near the end of the second world war. If it is possible to think of such serious and long-lasting effects being produced in the human body by a force of nature that is misused, is it surprising to see the greater effects caused by that greatest of all possible catastrophies, the rejection of the principle of true life and the adoption of a principle that God warned would certainly produce death?

Man was not alone in suffering the terrible consequence of his sin and separation from the "tree of life". The whole creation over which he had been placed as ruler became involved immediately. Just how this was is not revealed, but we know that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:22, 23).

The Redemption of the Body

The "adoption" spoken of is something that is to take place in the future; something the redeemed man looks forward to with intense longing. It is "the redemption of the body". Paul uses the same term again in Eph. 1:4, 5, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

The term means 'placing as a son' with the full privileges of sonship. It was used of the Roman youth when he came to the age of manhood, was permitted to wear the toga and took his place as a citizen.

We who are believers in Christ are sons of God already, we are born "not of the will of the flesh" but of the Spirit and are made "partakers of the Divine nature". We have "received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father". He is the 'seal' and 'earnest' of our inheritance (Jn. 1:13; 3:3-6; 2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 8:11, 15; Eph. 1:13, 14).

However, we still dwell in this "body of death": the redemption of the body has not yet been completed. We wait, and all nature waits, for "the manifestation of the sons of God"—for that day when the redeemed shall be caught up to be with the Lord

and shall receive their resurrection bodies, like unto His resurrection body, glorious, spiritual, incorruptible (Phil. 3:21). Then the redemption of the body will be complete and we shall enter into the full privileges of sonship in the heavenlies, which is our inheritance in Christ.

A Temple

Meanwhile, this body in which we now dwell is "the temple of the Holy Spirit". As Paul says, in this "earthen vessel", there shines the light which shone in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:6). In this body, imperfect as it is, dwells the Spirit of Christ.

The body feels hunger, pain and weariness. It does not think; it has no will; yet it can be given a place of dominance. It may become the idol of the soul. We may worship its beauty and bedeck it with raiment, jewelry, perfume and paint. We may love it and pamper it. We may pander to its appetites until, finally, we become its slave. We may degrade it and permit it to drag us down to the lowest depths of corruption, sorrow and shame.

The body must be kept in subjection. Paul said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection" (1 Cor. 9:27). This does not mean that the body should be ill-treated or martyred or abused. Our duty is to present it to God a living sacrifice, not a dead one. But the life that fills it should be that of the Holy Spirit who now dwells within it. We offer it to God that He may take full possession of it, cleansing it, manifesting His love and power through it and accomplishing His work by it.

The dwelling of God's Holy Spirit in this sin-ruined body still subject to sin and death is one of the great wonders of our redemption. We do not have to wait until we receive our perfect bodies before God will dwell in us. Our present bodies are His purchased possession. Satan has no claim over them. And such is the power of the Spirit of the resurrection—the Spirit who raised Christ from the dead—that He can take these weak and sin-cursed bodies of ours and manifest through them the resurrection life of Christ to the glory of God.

To do so, He does not change our bodies. He does not free them from sickness, weakness and death. That does not mean that no physical benefit results from a true life of holiness; it most certainly does. We have known many cases of converts, whose previous life of sin had seriously undermined their health but who, after conversion, regained their health to a remarkable degree.

Healing and Holiness

Our Lord showed His power to heal the body of its diseases. He is able to do so still and one of the manifestations of the Spirit in the Church is the gift of healing. It is a gift that should be manifested in the Church more than it is. But the purposes of this gift is not to ensure the believer against all disease. Like all the other gifts of the Spirit, its purpose is the manifesting of Christ through His Body, the Church, that souls may be saved and built up in the faith.

In the Early Church, the gift of healing was so used. Many were healed by the power of God. But also we find Trophimus left behind in Miletum sick, Timothy advised by Paul to take a remedy for stomach trouble and Paul obliged to continue enduring the "thorn in the flesh". These servants of the Lord had the gifts of healing and of faith. But in these cases, the Lord's purpose was best accomplished not through healing but through the discipline of sickness. It was made clear to Paul that the continuance of the thorn in the flesh was necessary to the manifestation of Christ's life and power through him.

Many a martyr, through the death of his body, has given the testimony that the Lord and the Church required. Not a few of the Lord's servants through whom He manifested Himself greatly have had to contend with sickness and physical weakness. The Lord's glory was revealed not through healing them but through the resurrection life which triumphed in the midst of weakness, even making that weakness its instrument. How many who have come to know the Lord intimately and have gone deep in the things of the Spirit have reached that place through trouble! Is it not through much travail that the richest fruit is gained? As Dean Alford wrote:

"Thou canst not tell
How rich a dowry sorrow gives the soul,
How firm a faith, and eagle-sight of God."

Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was from Satan to buffet him, yet God did not remove it. God's purpose was the forming of Christ's image in him. To have given Paul his desire would not have accomplished that; leaving the "thorn" did. That reveals to us the great principle that God's primary purpose in the believer always is the forming of Christ in him. Whatever God does to us, whether the giving of healing or the withholding of it, will depend always upon which will accomplish His primary purpose.

It is the believer's duty to keep his body holy that God may use it fully. There is sin that defiles the body. It is the duty of the believer to take reasonable care of the body. While to pamper it is wrong, to be unnecessarily careless of it is equally wrong. It is sinful to indulge any habits that are injurious to it in any way. For that reason, alcoholic drinks and tobacco should not be used. Even in his habits of eating and sleep the believer has a duty to his Lord. Only when a higher spiritual duty demands it may he neglect the reasonable care of his body. Then he may look to the Lord with confidence to undertake and minister to his physical need as may be necessary.

Holiness cannot be obtained by ill-treating the body. Self-inflicted pain and discomfort is not holiness nor can it produce holiness. A converted Spanish ex-priest described to us how in the monastery he had worn coarse cloth next the skin, slept on boards and lashed himself until drops of blood surrounded him on the floor, in a vain search for holiness. All such effort is in the soulish realm. It is not spiritual in any sense. Paul calls it "a show of wisdom in will worship". It is effected by the determined exercise of the will. The soul takes pride in it and offers it to God. It is of the same order as Cain's offering. Man would make himself holy by works, by self-inflicted pain, but, as Paul says, the "humiliation and chastening of the body are of no value to check the indulgence of fleshly passions" (Col. 2:23 Conybeare).

Physical pain and suffering may be the instruments in God's hands for producing holiness. It was so in Paul's case. But his sufferings were not self-inflicted; nor did God cause them. They were the work of the enemies of the Gospel. His thorn in the flesh was a "messenger of Satan to buffet" him—to harass, discourage and cripple him; but God, who "makes all things work together for good to them . . . that are called according to His purpose", made it His instrument for the producing of holiness in His servant and for the giving of a testimony and an example to the Church. It was through much suffering that Paul filled up that which is lacking of the sufferings of Christ for His Body's sake which is the Church, manifesting to the Church a life lived in the flesh to the glory of God.

In such suffering, the will is exercised not to produce it but to endure it. It produces not pride but humility, dependence upon God and the consequent spiritual strength which these give.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MIND

The mind is man's power of thought, knowledge and reason. It is a faculty of the soul; an instrument created by God, of vast capabilities, of great power and of great usefulness. There is much concerning it in God's Word, for it plays an essential part in the affairs of men.

The mind is thought of as the most powerful of man's faculties. It is in the mind that the natural man puts his trust. It is his light; the fount of his knowledge. However, we find that the scope of its activity and of its knowledge are strictly limited and that it is controlled largely by the heart and the will.

It is exceedingly helpful to the believer to see what God reveals to us concerning the mind, for it will enable us to use it rightly and not abuse it, to understand its purpose, to recognise its limitations and to avoid the dangers into which its misuse will lead us.

The mind is a marvellous faculty enabling us to know, to understand, to search out knowledge, to store it, tabulate it, co-ordinate it and form conclusions. Through the mind, by the Spirit, God enables us to know Him and His wisdom and will. It is part of the likeness to God in which man was created.

The mind of God is surpassingly wonderful. Its power is infinite. It is limited only by His love and holiness. It is the Lord of all knowledge. Its greatness as compared with man's mind is expressed in Isaiah 55:9: "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my . . . thoughts than your thoughts". Paul, in an outburst of praise, exclaims, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" We are told that "He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names" (Ps. 147:4). If the number of the stars is so great that it is beyond the capacity of the human mind to grasp, how great must be the power of the mind of God who can call them all by their names! And yet that is but a small thing with God. It is beyond the power of man's mind to comprehend fully the greatness of God's mind.

Man's Mental Equipment

Man's mind in its perfect state, when he was first created, was fully capacitated for the work to which he was appointed of

God.¹ It has two avenues of information: one spiritual, through revelation; the other material, through the five senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. Thus Adam had access to complete knowledge that fitted him for a life of perfect accomplishment and happiness in the sphere in which he was placed.

Through the Spirit Adam had perfect communion with God and fellowshiped fully with Him in His thoughts and purposes. Through his physical powers of perception he had access to the natural realm and was enabled to obtain the information he required concerning the material world in which he was to exercise dominion.

When man became separated from God through sin and, virtually, died spiritually, his participation in true spiritual life ceased. Communion with God being cut off, true spiritual knowledge was lost. He became dependent for all his knowledge upon the five senses. These pertain to the natural realm. Through them he can investigate and come to know all natural phenomena, but they are not designed to obtain information regarding the spiritual realm. Through his physical sense-perception he is incapable of seeing, comparing and studying spirit beings. The realm of spirits is beyond the range of his natural powers.

Thus, while man's mind has a capacity for spiritual knowledge—being capable of receiving it through the Spirit—it is deprived of it through his spiritual condition. It is, however, still possible for him to establish contact with God, at the place which God prepared immediately after the Fall, where man can enter into communion with Him through the sacrifice offering for sin.

Besides its lack of light, man's mind, as we have seen, is profoundly influenced by his heart. His heart can cloud and corrupt his wisdom. Even if his reasoning be sound it may be set aside by his heart. In fact, the condition of the mind and the results of its work depend upon the condition of the heart.

In the final instance the mind is controlled either by true love or self-love. True love gives a sound basis to reason; self-love distorts the vision and darkens the reason. It was by self-love that Satan's wisdom was darkened. The mind actually is a servant of the heart: it will always find reasons or excuses to support what the heart loves most. The mind of the one who loves God with the whole heart will be an understanding instrument in the hands of the Spirit to be used to the glory of God.

The mind is but an instrument for the acquiring of knowledge.

¹ The effect of the fall upon man's mental capacity has already been noted. See p. 29.

It has no feeling. Feelings belong to the heart; it loves, desires or hates, and by these makes the mind its handmaiden.

Fallen Man's Mind

Such is the condition of fallen man today. Dependent entirely for light upon his physical sense-perception, he studies the natural phenomena around him. Upon the information this gives him he builds his theories, forms his conclusions, orders his life, constructs the fabric of his social order and prepares for the future.

He can discover the facts and secrets of nature. He can acquire exact knowledge in all the fields of natural science. He can find means to utilise the power of steam, electricity and the atom. But when he seeks to relate this knowledge to life, or to consider the problems of life and his relations with his fellowmen, his information is inadequate. He sees life only in its relation to the material, he considers man only as material and mortal, and he appraises all in accordance with the dominating principle of his heart—self-love—which, no matter what efforts may have been made to embellish it or reform it, lies as a canker at the root of every conclusion.

Always there is something vital lacking. Being ignorant of the spiritual factors, man's basis has no true solidity, for it is that which is spiritual that has true reality and stability. That which is material is temporal, subject to change, unstable and ultimately dependent upon laws that are spiritual. Therefore factors of supreme importance are omitted in his calculations. This is true of the most brilliant minds, the most learned scholars, the most able statesmen. As they deal with life their knowledge is incomplete and their findings necessarily inaccurate. That is why we see brilliant men, experienced and, it may be, well-meaning, blundering on, following the half-light of human theories and ideologies, undiscerning of their inconsistencies, and leading the nations into ever increasing chaos.

But even in the material realm there are still vast regions unexplored. In many matters of the greatest import man is still groping with hypothesis and theories, proceeding, not infrequently, from ignorance through hypothesis to deeper ignorance. He cannot affirm that he knows even himself yet. There are powers of the soul about which he still knows very little.

The vogues of scientific opinion change from generation to generation, and even from decade to decade. Yesterday its theories were hailed as the final word of truth; today those

theories are discarded as disproved and others are confidently acclaimed; but tomorrow these also will share the same fate. Yet man has become no humbler. He is hiding from God, as Adam and Eve sought to do among the "trees", endeavouring to shut God out of his world and to stifle the voice of the Spirit of God who is ever seeking to speak to him.

An example of the conclusions of man's wisdom is provided by Bertrand Russell, considered to have one of the most brilliant minds of the present generation, a great mathematician and a Nobel Prize winner for Literature. We quote from his essay, "A Free Man's Worship":

That man is the product of causes that had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system; and that the whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built.

Well does God's Word describe fallen, Godless man as "without hope". Could there be more unrelieved despair, more determined blindness, more utter darkness, more crass stupidity? All man's boasted wisdom and mental brilliance, his learned theories and philosophies, the "assured findings" of modern science can lead him only to despair and death—to a great abyss of utter darkness in which all is forever lost. In his flight from God he stands and says that he cannot see God—and he discerns not or strives to discern not, how cruelly his vaunted wisdom turns to mock him.

The consequences that this flight from God can bring even upon his physical health are noted by R. E. D. Clark, who explains Darwin's mysterious illness as a result of his life-long attempt to escape from Paley and from God.¹

In our youth we became troubled by doubt. We had experienced conversion at the age of eleven, but in our student days atheistic arguments deeply affected our thinking and we began to doubt seriously the existence of God. Atheistic philosophy offered intellectual freedom through denial of God's existence.

¹ Darwin, *Before and After*.

To an awakening mind that offer was tempting. Our intellectual difficulty to believe in the existence of God was real. The mind required proof.

Of course, the reason was that the heart was not inclined towards God. But, having been made a child of God, His Spirit was within—and God never abandons His child. The conflict was great and long continued—so great that health was affected. Yet most significantly, through all the darkness there remained a light. In the darkest hours of doubt, when there seemed to be no light anywhere, something would cause us to go to our knees in prayer to God, and there, in spite of the assailing doubt, there was a sense of touching something real—the only reality in the midst of all the surrounding instability.

One day, driven to seek that touch of reality once more, we cried with sincerity to God, "God, if there be a God, enable me to know it". Immediately there came before us, as clearly as if we saw it with the natural eye, a vision that cleared away all doubt. We were standing on the edge of a precipice that dropped sheer from our feet. Before us all was a dark, murky twilight. Beyond the brink nothing was to be seen but a misty darkness. As we looked down there was a sense that there was no bottom there, nothing whatsoever. As we looked forward there was a deep impression that the darkness contained nothing but emptiness—an infinity of darkness with nothing that was solid anywhere to lay hold upon. As we looked up there was the same completely empty darkness.

Something seemed to say clearly within us, "Deny the existence of God and you step off solid ground into that murky darkness where there is no foundation or anything to stand upon or grasp or see, but a vast and fearful emptiness and utter loneliness". As we knelt and looked at that vision, God gave understanding. We considered the firm ground still under our feet, whose comfort we would abandon, and it began to become clear to us that there was no other solid ground and that Scripture was right when it said that, "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God". Again something seemed to say to us, "To say that there is a God requires a faith that is based upon solid reason; to say that there is no God requires a faith that is blind and rests upon nothing".

The struggle was ended. We had asked God to show us if He indeed existed and He had done so. We had wanted to have our reason satisfied with a clear proof and He had condescended to do so.

We can understand Bertrand Russell's conclusion. It is exactly what God revealed to us in our youth. Man's God-excluding wisdom can lead him to no other conclusion, and Bertrand Russell has at least had the courage to be honest, even when that honesty made necessary the utterance of the most evident folly.

Soulish Wisdom

In the three opening chapters of the first letter to the carnal Corinthian congregation, Paul reveals much regarding the condition and limitations of the soul-man. The key to what he writes is found in chapter two, verse fourteen: "But the carnal (Greek—soulish) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Here it is categorically stated, not only that the soulish man does not possess any knowledge of spiritual things, but that he is incapable of knowing them. Because of that they appear to him as foolish—unreal and purely imaginary. Knowing and experiencing only that which is of the material realm he cannot conceive of the existence of a spiritual realm. Because it is beyond his powers of physical perception, he would conclude that it does not and cannot exist. So he regards it as a mark of the highest wisdom and intelligence to deny its existence.

Referring to the limitations of man's powers of sense-perception, Paul says, quoting Isa. 64:4, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9).

The natural eye, ear and heart cannot enable man to know God's thoughts and plans. Through them he has clear evidence of the existence of God. He can see God's works. The creation declares the wonders of God's wisdom. The great heathen philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, postulated the existence of a Creator. As it is said in Romans 1:20 (Weymouth), "For from the very creation of the world, His invisible perfections—namely, His eternal power and divine nature—have been rendered intelligible and clearly visible by His works, so that these men are without excuse". Having ample evidence from his senses that an all-wise God exists, fallen man is responsible to seek Him.

But by his own wisdom man—even the wisest of men—cannot discern God's thoughts and know "the mystery": God's eternal purpose in Christ, planned "before the foundation of the world". However, Paul says, "God has revealed them unto us by His

Spirit". All our knowledge of God's purposes is revealed to us by the Spirit through the Word. And even that which is written of Him in the Word cannot be truly comprehended without the aid of the Spirit.

Paul then shows that this wisdom received from the Spirit places the spiritual man in a special position, "But the spiritual man judges all things truly, but cannot himself truly be judged by others" (1 Cor. 2:15, Conybeare). The man with spiritual light as well as his human knowledge has a complete basis upon which he can judge all things correctly, but his judgment will not be understandable to the purely soulish man. "Where is the philosopher", asks Paul, "Where is the Rabbi? Where is the reasoner of this world? Has not God turned the world's wisdom into folly? for when the world had failed to gain by its wisdom the knowledge of God, in the wisdom of God, it pleased God by the folly (seemingly so to soulish wisdom) of our preaching to save those who believe" (1 Cor. 1:20-21, Conybeare).

But not only has man by his sin cut himself off from fellowship with God and the knowledge of Divine wisdom, he has placed himself in the sphere of Satan's dominion. He has yielded his heart and mind to the influence of that spirit-being who takes full advantage of that fact. "If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. 4:3, 4). For "the Greeks demand philosophy; but we proclaim the Messiah crucified . . . to the Greeks a folly . . . but the folly of God is wiser than man's wisdom" (1 Cor. 1:22-25, Conybeare). "God has chosen the things which this world regards as foolish, in order to put its wise men to shame; and God has chosen the things which the world considers as destitute of influence, in order to put its powerful things to shame, and the things which the world regards as base, and those which it sets utterly at naught—things that [to the world's wisdom] have no existence—God has chosen in order to reduce to nothing things that [to the world's wisdom] do exist; to prevent any mortal man from boasting in the presence of God" (1 Cor. 1:27-29, Weymouth).

The Soulsh Religious Man's Mind

This soulsh blindness can affect not only those who reject God but also those who profess to believe in Him. Of the Jews it is written, "Their minds were blinded; yea to this day, when

they read in their synagogues the ancient covenant, the same veil rests thereon, nor can they see beyond it that the law is done away in Christ, but even now when Moses is read in their hearing a veil lies upon their heart. But when their heart turns to the Lord the veil is rent away" (2 Cor. 3:14-16, Conybeare).

Here it is recognized that the root of the trouble is in the heart. When the heart's love is given to God the mind will be cleared of all its darkness, for the corrupted wisdom is the result of the self-love that reigns in the heart.

"The Jews require a sign" from heaven. To them "Christ crucified is a stumbling-block" (1 Cor. 1:22, 23). To their soulish religious wisdom Christ's witness and work could not be understood because to their hearts He was not acceptable. "The light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not... And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth"—but "they received Him not" (Jn. 1:11, 14). He refused to give a sign for man's soulish religious wisdom to judge. The sign which He did give—His crucifixion and resurrection from the grave after three days—condemned their wisdom (Jn. 2:18-21; Matt. 12:38-42).

The Jewish religion of that time was largely soulish: a religion of dogmas and lip-profession, external symbols and traditions, ceremonies and works. The Spirit of God was no longer active in it. Soulish wisdom excluded Him. Little was left but a lifeless soulish skeleton, with which the soulish man was content and in which he took a fanatical pride. The Cross with its spiritual wisdom was unintelligible to him. It was contrary to his whole philosophy and he rejected it as obnoxious. Christ's witness cut across all that was dear to soulish religious wisdom so they crucified "the Lord of glory".

The Believer's Mind

This blindness is not peculiar to the Jews. It is common to all soulish religious men. Even the believer born again of the Spirit is in danger of being affected by it.

Let us consider the mind of the believer in Christ. Through the Spirit he has contact with God, can know God's will and fellowship with Him in His thought. Through the Spirit he has "the mind of Christ". "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things... the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man (with man's wisdom) teach you" (1 John 2:20, 27).

Such is the believer's privilege; such is the position in which he has been placed. Having access to full light, he may walk in full light. Not only so: having access to full light he is responsible to walk in full light, and to the extent that he does not do so he sins.

While the believer has the mind of Christ through the presence of the Holy Spirit within him, it is still possible for him to walk in the wisdom of the soulish man. His judgments may be based wholly or partly upon soulish reasoning. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "I am afraid that, as the serpent in his craftiness deceived Eve, so your minds may be led astray from their single-heartedness and their fidelity to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3, Weymouth). To the Colossians he wrote, "Take care lest there be some one who leads you away as prisoners by means of his philosophy and idle fancies, following human traditions and the world's crude notions instead of following Christ" (Col. 2:8, Weymouth).

The soulish mind is naturally "enmity against God". Its judgments are contrary to His judgments. It cannot understand God. Always, whether in the believer or the unbeliever, it considers that which is beyond its knowledge as foolish. It causes the believer to doubt the practical reality of the presence and power of the Spirit of God and to place his reliance upon that which is material and soulish.

The mind may know spiritual facts but it cannot fully understand them. By the Spirit only can they be truly comprehended. The mind receives them by faith given by the Spirit, or it rejects them; believes them, or doubts them. To the mind, faith is the substance of these things; it brings them into the realm of reality and makes them life, power and practical wisdom.

As the soulish man cannot understand God's thoughts, so he cannot understand the spiritual man's thoughts. To the soulish man, the spiritual man is an enigma, incomprehensible, foolish. Nor can the soulish believer understand the thoughts of the spiritual believer.

The believer's mind, just as the unbeliever's mind, is guided either by true love or self-love. Self-love in all its manifestations—selfishness, self-pity, fearfulness, covetousness, pride of heart, a root of bitterness, hate, love of the world and of the things of the world—shuts out the pure light of the mind of Christ. "For if men are controlled by their earthly natures, they give their minds to earthly things. If they are controlled by their spiritual natures, they give their minds to spiritual things. Because for the mind to be given up to earthly things means death; but for it

to be given up to spiritual things means life and peace. Abandonment to earthly things is a state of enmity towards God. Such a mind does not submit to God's law and indeed cannot do so" (Rom. 8:5-7, Weymouth).

The soulish mind would control the believer's ministry, causing him to trust in soulish wisdom. Speaking of his own ministry, Paul said, "When I proclaimed my message I used not persuasive words of human wisdom, but showed forth the working of God's Spirit and power, that your faith might have its foundation not in the wisdom of men but in the power of God . . . It is God's wisdom that I speak, whereof the secret is made known to His people; even the hidden wisdom of God ordained before the ages, that we might be glorified thereby . . . God hath revealed them to us by His Spirit. For the Spirit fathoms all things, even the depths of God . . . These are the things whereof we speak, in words not taught by man's wisdom, but by the Spirit; explaining spiritual things to spiritual men" (1 Cor. 2:4-13, Conybeare).

Again he said, "Through Christ I have this confidence before God; not thinking myself sufficient to gain wisdom by my own reasonings, as if it came from myself, but drawing my sufficiency from God" (2 Cor. 3:4, 5, Conybeare). For this reason Paul's ministry was truly spiritual. The wisdom and power of the Spirit was manifested through him and spiritual fruit was borne.

The soulish mind would take control of the believer's worship, attributing spiritual virtue to natural phenomena—to emotion, music, art, money, eloquence, buildings, symbols, rites, etc. That is superstition. The heathen does so.

Satanic Influence

The believer's mind may be influenced directly by the reasonings of Satan. When Peter advised Christ, "Pity thyself", Christ's answer was, "Get thee behind me, Satan". It is by no means uncommon for Satan to suggest plausible arguments to the mind of the believer. He is continually doing so. He knows the nature of the natural mind and heart and presents the subtlest reasons for taking the course that is most understandable and agreeable to it. It was not long before he began to build strongholds of human "imaginings" (reasonings) within the Church. Paul had to contend with them in the Corinthian congregation. He writes to that church, "For the weapons which I wield are not of fleshly weakness, but mighty in the strength of God to overthrow the strongholds of the adversaries. Thereby I can overthrow the

reasonings of the disputer, and pull down all lofty bulwarks that raise themselves against the knowledge of God, and bring every rebellious thought into captivity and subject to Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4, 5, Conybeare).

The departure of the Church from the spiritual order revealed in the New Testament and practised in the Early Church is all due to the introduction of Satan-inspired human reasonings. Man thought of better, wiser and easier ways, of more attractive forms, of more efficient organization. And it is entirely due to human reasonings today that the Church clings to man's ways and judges it impossible to return to the Scriptural pattern. Satan's suggestions cause us to doubt God's power really to do all He has said, and to doubt the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish God's work through us. Satan causes us by his reasoning to regard these truths as theoretical doctrine only and to put our trust, for the practical things of life and service, in the wisdom and power of man: to exchange the "demonstration of the Spirit and of power" of Paul's witness for the power of man's abilities; the evangelism of Pentecost for the comfortable pew; the personal responsibility for witness of every believer as a priest unto God for the largely silent "laity"; the spiritual organism born at Pentecost for the rationalised, organized Church.

The soulish mind, or the carnal mind, may be sincere in its wrong conclusions; but that does not make these conclusions less wrong or harmful. Paul says, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 26:9). The result was that terrible suffering was brought upon some of God's children. Our blind sincerity will not prevent us from being wrong, working in opposition to God's purpose and doing injury to His work.

The believer's mind as we have seen, is not free from danger. Satan continually seeks to influence it. By nature it is carnal. Only as it is renewed by the Spirit, as moment by moment we will to walk in yieldedness to God, can its light be true and full. The "two-edged sword" must be permitted to do its work. We must be watchful to walk as children of light and not as children of darkness; not as "unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). We are not left in ignorance of Satan's devices. We must see to it, by the Lord's grace, that our love is to Him alone. Then indeed the mind of Christ will become effective in us; then we shall "be filled with the knowledge of His will", and His wisdom and power shall be manifested through us.

We cannot put confidence in the thoughts of man. We cannot trust our own wisdom. But we have a sure Word: a Light in which there is truth and wisdom and security; in that there is peace, rest and eternal strength. "It is not in man to direct his steps"; but the Lord will lead us forth "by the right way".

CHAPTER IX

THE WILL

The will is an exceedingly wonderful thing. It issues the commands that decide our every action. For good or ill it makes our lives and decides our destiny.

Some functions of the body are involuntary; others are not. The heart works entirely apart from the will, but not so the breathing. We do not raise a finger without an act of the will. Every moment of our waking hours, from birth to the grave, the will is in ceaseless action, controlling the movement of our limbs, our thoughts, words and purposes. From Command Headquarters there issues forth a constant stream of decisions that are acted upon immediately and unquestioningly.

The will is part of that glorious likeness of God in which man originally was made. God's will is a supremely wonderful thing, infinitely more so than man's, ceaseless in its activity, never sleeping, determining everything that, in His perfect wisdom, He purposes shall be.

In His Word, God has told us much about His will. It is governed always by the law of love; indeed, it is the will of perfect love and, therefore, perfect, sovereign, almighty, irresistible. He tells us many things that He has willed. Some of these have been fully accomplished; others, as yet, are only partly realised, while many belong entirely to the future. Heaven and earth, man and Satan, believers and unbelievers, all are affected by the decisions which God has made, the things He has purposed shall be. The thought of what God has willed opens before us far vistas in which we discern many things glorious and wonderful: things that are and things that are not yet but shall be because God has willed them. But it is rather of man's will that we are thinking.

Man's will is sovereign. God made it so. It had to be sovereign if man was to fellowship with God in a true communion of love and service. A free will is essential to perfect love. Love which is obligatory loses the element that gives it true value. Likewise, true fellowship in service requires a will that knows no slavery and that is bound only by the laws of love.

God's will is sovereign; yet it is not uncontrolled. It is subject absolutely to the laws of love. And yet it is absolutely free, because, by its own free act it subjects itself to these laws. It subjects itself to these laws because they are the basic laws of

His nature and of the universe He has created—the basic laws of all truth.

Christ's Will

In Christ we see the will in action. He was the "Son of Man", God manifest in the flesh, and He is our example in all things. In Him we see the perfect, God-controlled will. Free as the air He breathed, sovereign as being entirely His own and subject to none, faced with all the consequences of its choices, either for good or evil, for comfort and peace or suffering and sacrifice, Christ's will was exercised continually and subjected voluntarily and absolutely to the laws of love. It was the instrument of perfect love.

"I lay down my life", He said, "no man taketh it from Me". Everything He did, He did because He wished to do it, and it was done by an act of His own will. "In the volume of the book it is written of me, I come to do thy will, O God". "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

Christ's decision to do the will of God on earth was made before He left the Glory. It meant the sacrifice of His rightful glory, stripping Himself of all the comforts and benefits and privileges that were His in His Heavenly Home where all was perfect love, taking the form of created man, entering the realm of fallen man where the curse of self-love ruled, laying aside all privileges to become a servant and humbling self even unto death and the shame of the Cross. But He willed to come.

On earth "He set His face steadfastly to go toward Jerusalem". In Gethsemane we see His will in action and we see the cost of His decision. But to this we shall return later.

The Believer's Will

Much is said in the Word about the believer's will. It is sovereign and free. Upon it depends his every act. He had to will to accept the Redemption of Calvary before the great work that Christ had wrought for him could be made his. God's will for him as a believer is made plain, but he must accept that will voluntarily and definitely decide to do it.

What is the will? It is the power of decision, or the determination that a certain purpose shall be fulfilled. What determines an act of the will? It is determined by the heart and judgment based upon what is known. But heart and mind do not naturally accept God's will, for they are carnal. Satan continually appeals to both. He fans our self-love, offering visions of that

which appeals to it and he throws doubt upon God's pledged Word and His power to fulfil it. He seeks to make that which is desirable seem undesirable, and that which is undesirable seem desirable. He persuades us that God's will is impracticable and that we have a more practical wisdom. His great purpose is to oppose the carrying out of God's will that his own will may be wrought, therefore he strives with all his power and cunning to substitute in the believer's heart and mind love of self and confidence in self for love to God and confidence in God so that the believer's will also may be set against the will of God. It was thus he tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden and our Lord in the desert. Eve's will he subverted; our Lord he could not conquer; nor can he conquer any believer who is truly yielded to God and in whom the Spirit of the Lord dwells in the fulness of His power.

The responsibility to exercise our will is ever upon us. Moment by moment our will must act. We accept this; we reject that. We decide to what extent we shall accept God's will, or do our own. When we decide to do the will of the flesh or to compromise and only partially do God's will, we say our will is weak. It is not weak; it is strong to decide for our own desire and to will against God's will. It is the heart that is weak. The will is weak to do God's will because we love the sin that we do. The will, in the final issue, is the servant either of true love or self-love: we will to do that which we love most.

Man's will may offer worship to God. It will keep days, impose fasts and prohibitions and afflict the body. In this it is the instrument of the pride and self-righteousness of the soulish heart (Col. 2:21-23). Such "will worship" is a counterfeit of the Cross, permitting self-love to live and to glory in its goodness and strength.

God's Will and Mine

The adjustment of our will to God's will is not the abject acceptance of His arbitrary rule. It was not so with Christ's obedience to the Father and it is not so with us. God does not rule arbitrarily. He could not will otherwise than He does and be true to the laws of perfect love, truth and justice. When we will to do His will we but conform to these same laws. But we do so, not as we see them with our imperfect vision, not as we judge with our imperfect judgment, but as He in His infinite wisdom and knowledge sees and judges. By the Spirit we have knowledge and understanding of His wisdom; through love to

Him we have confidence in His wisdom; and through faith we enter into its full accomplishment.

The believer's will is the determining factor in his spiritual experience and progress. The provision which God has made for us of knowledge and power is complete. We are risen with Christ, made partakers of His life, and seated with Him in the heavenlies. We are made "complete in Him". We are indwelt by His Spirit. We have "the mind of Christ". But the extent to which we partake in all this provision depends upon our will.

God urges us in many places in the Word to will to do His will, but He never forces us. To know the "good and acceptable and perfect will of God", we must will to yield our bodies a living sacrifice, even though they are God's possession. To follow Christ in full fellowship and ministry we must will to take up the Cross and deny self. To be used as an instrument of righteousness we must will to yield our members. All these things depend upon definite and continuous acts of our own free will.

The full provision for a life of glorious victory in Christ over sin and self; the fulness of the power of the Spirit; the bearing of abundant spiritual fruit that will remain to eternity—all are ours in Christ; ours as we are willing to pay the price and take them.

"It is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure." The free and definite exercise of our will is essential. But the mere exercise of the will cannot produce spiritual power or fruit. The Father dwelt in Christ and the power with which Christ willed and worked was the power of the Spirit of the Living God. That Spirit dwells within us who are born again by the Spirit, and by His power we live and work. As we will that which is truly God's will, the Holy Spirit also wills it in us. He wills it and He accomplishes it. It is not accomplished by a strong action of our will: by our power. We can do nothing without Him, but He can do nothing until we know God's will and freely and definitely will to do it. Therefore He and we are full partners in the willing and doing. When the slave of any sin wills God's will, he is freed immediately for then the power of God's will is released to enable him and the victory is his.

When we will truly to do God's will, it becomes possible for God to accomplish all that He has willed concerning us. "All things are possible to him that believeth"—if he is willing. God has already willed it for him and when his will opens the door for God to do it, it is done. God's will can become effective only

when we are willing. Then His will and the omnipotent power that backs it come into effect and His Word is fulfilled.

But the willingness on man's part must be real. It must be willingness backed by the heart: willingness which the heart's love dictates. If it is backed by the mind only, it is not real. True faith and obedience are both the fruit of love. Even where we do not understand, the will can be allied with God's will in true faith and obedience when the heart is back of it. But where the heart is not back of the will, our willing will be weak. Thus again we see the heart as the root of all man's actions; the master of the will.

CHAPTER X

THE NATURE OF LOVE

When the Holy Spirit spoke of the Word of God as sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing between and dividing asunder of soul and spirit, "even to the inward parts thereof", He mentioned particularly one element of the soul: the heart—"judging the thoughts and imaginations of the heart" (Heb. 4:12, Conyheare).

Thus we find recognised the fact that the heart, the seat of the affections and other emotions and desires, plays the predominant part in the attitude and actions of the soul.

In the Divine nature also, the heart is central and supreme. When we say that God is Love we know that we have expressed the length and breadth and height and depth of the Divine nature. Love is the great, unfathomable, omnipotent, omniscient, all-inclusive principle of His Being (Eph. 3:18, 19).

Our Lord stated that the whole Law and all the teaching of the Prophets is derived from the first commandment and its corollary, the second commandment; "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt. 22:37-40). All revelation, all doctrine, all the commandments of God, are but derivations of this supreme, all-embracing, basic law of perfect love.

An Image and Likeness

If we would know what true love is, we must turn our eyes to God, not to man. In Him, we see its nature, its work, its power and its wisdom. In His purposes for man and dealings with man, we see the manifestation of love.

What is love? It has been defined as "A desire for and delight in the welfare of the one loved". But is it not much more than that—vaster and more profound, higher, richer and costlier than any such definition can express? We are told that the breadth, length, depth and height of Christ's love passes knowledge. It is something far greater than human love can attain to. It cannot be said of human love that it "heareth all things, endureth all things, seeketh not its own" and "never faileth". Human love is not perfectly pure; it is limited and weak. Self-love sets definite

bounds to its sacrifice and demands ultimately the return of something for self.

Human love may appear to be a beautiful thing. It is beautiful, but only with the beauty of something that once was perfect but has become broken and tarnished and retains only a suggestion of its former glory. When placed by the side of perfect love it is found to be greatly wanting.

A definition of love is given in 1 Jn. 3:16, "Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us". This is enlarged upon in Rom. 5:7, 8 (Weymouth), "Why, it is scarcely conceivable that anyone would die for a simply just man, although for a good and lovable man perhaps some one, here and there, will have the courage even to lay down his life. But God gives proof of his love to us in Christ's dying for us while we were yet sinners". It is not in love's dealings with those who love in return and the deserving that its true nature is fully revealed but in its manifestation towards those who spurn it in deliberate, scornful rebellion and deadly hate. It is then that its true character is made known. Of that love man is not capable. It demands the absolute sacrifice of self and that man is not willing to give.

Perfect love is holy. To be perfect it must be absolutely pure. It is perfect in its knowledge. It sees with eyes that are pure and knows that which is truth. It is perfect in justice for its judgments are pure and true. It is perfect in wisdom because it is perfect in purity and knowledge. It is perfect in might because with it is all purity and truth. It is invincible and irresistible. It is perfect in faith and hope, knowing no fear, acknowledging no impossibility and seeing before it the certainty of the triumph of its perfect love. All this we see in God's dealings with man.

Let us recapitulate. As we have already seen, love, being active, not passive, requires an object. Without an object, it cannot be complete. To manifest itself it must express itself.

Thus God created man as an object of His love.

But the realisation of love cannot be complete without the communion of love. The one who loves must become the object of love of the one who is beloved.

So God created man to return His love.

Furthermore, the communion of love, to be unselfish, must have as its objective the producing of the fruits of love in blessing to others. Thus love has its perfect fulfilment in co-operation in the doing of love's work.

So God created man to be a co-labourer with Him in love's work upon the earth.

Love begets love. The God of love could create only love. So He created man in His own image, after His own likeness. Love was basic in man's being as God created him, just as it is basic in God. Man was perfect in love, and lived in a world, the basic principle of whose creation and structure was perfect love. His life was ruled by perfect love and expressed in perfect love, and his government of the earth in which God had placed him to rule was to be a government of perfect love.

But man failed.

Man, tempted by Satan, fell into Satan's sin. The seed of self-love was received into his heart. In consequence, communion with perfect love, in fellowship and in the work of love, became for him impossible.

He doubted God. His own love having become impure and unfaithful, he doubted the faithfulness of God's love. Self-glorification and self-worship were the immediate fruits. His mind became completely darkened and in his thought he vested himself with the glory of God and, setting God aside, placed himself upon the Throne.

God had made a likeness of Himself: a being He could love with perfect love and who could return His love in a communion of perfect love. But the image was marred, ruined. It became the likeness of that which is most contrary and most hateful to perfect love: of that from which springs all sin, suffering and death.

Love had failed—in man. In God it did not fail: "Love endureth all things; love believeth all things".

Love did not turn from its purpose. The image would be purified, remade. He would present man in the presence of His glory, faultless in love (Eph. 1:4).

Perfect love is perfect justice. Man's sin could not be overlooked; not because of an academic principle, but because of the fact that love must be pure to be perfect, must be holy, and, therefore, all impurity must be excluded, destroyed. The barest touch of self-love means death to perfect love. Love hates sin with a hatred that is just and pure. The sinner who will not forsake his sin comes under the terrible, implacable and just wrath of perfect love against his sin. Fallen man's condition was an awful one. He was ruined, guilty, condemned, separated from God and incapable of justifying himself. Before him was Hell, an eternity of punishment through the consequences of his sin.

He who says that a God of love would be incapable of con-

demning the unrepentant sinner to eternal punishment and banishment from His presence fails to understand the nature of perfect love which must exclude all sin, and whose condemnation of sin of any kind must be complete and irrevocable.

But "love never faileth", and God's love could not fail. Perfect love did the only thing that perfect love could do: it took man's sin upon itself; it drank the bitter cup of man's expiation to the last drop, and so became his perfect Substitute. "Love endureth all things".

Man could be redeemed. His redemption could be accomplished only by the ultimate sacrifice of God, but love could not withhold its all. So from God Himself has emanated the greatest, sublimest and most glorious possible demonstration of love.

Since "before the foundation of the world" this was in God's heart and plan. Immediately sin appeared He promised it to man.

Love asked nothing in return but love: "By grace ye are saved through faith . . . it is the gift of God. Not of works . . ." The cost to us could be only one thing—the return of perfect love. The only recompense that love can demand or desire is the return of love. Love cannot be purchased; it cannot be sold. Works and sacrifices and self-inflicted sufferings cannot gain it. It is beyond all price. And it is above all price. It is not a commodity to be bought and sold; it is the sum of all good, the element of God's universe, God's very life, and the breath that man must breathe to live.

This being so, it might seem that it would be a simple matter for man to accept the offer of love and be restored to his former felicity. Love bore the penalty and made possible not merely pardon but complete legal justification. On the side of love the door was thrown wide open. But the difficulty was on the other side. To return to God man had to confess his sin and accept God's law. That meant the surrender of soulish independence, self-interest and self-glory—the dethroning of self. Even for such a gain, man was not willing to do that. There was a veil upon his heart; his mind was corrupted.

Thus love must not only provide salvation, full and free, but also give the understanding to comprehend it, and this work the Holy Spirit is nigh to perform in the heart and mind of every man who is willing to turn to God.

Another Image Made

In the fulness of time, another image of God was formed upon the earth. Christ was "the brightness of God's glory, the express

image of His person . . ." (Heb. 1:3). In Him man saw, manifested in the flesh, perfect love. The Eternal Word became incarnate and "dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

He left the perfection of His Heavenly home and manifested the Image in the midst of Satan's Cosmos. He humbled Himself, taking the form of a man. He came as a servant, not to be served but to serve. He came to fulfil the law of love—to love God with the whole heart and His neighbour as Himself.

The principle of His life and work was perfect love. Never for a moment was self-interest or self-glory the hidden motive of any act or word. He was very man but also He was very God. He was Emmanuel, God with us. He, with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, was the Creator of this world. He was the King of Love; the rightful ruler of this world. He came to manifest love and through it to reveal the sinfulness of sin—of Satan's sin and man's sin—and accomplish man's redemption.

The moment He entered the Cosmos in His human body the battle was joined and we witness the greatest struggle of all time between the greatest of all forces—perfect love and self-love. Man participated on the side of self-love as Satan's tool. Christ, the Image, stood alone; no man stood with Him. And all the spiritual hosts of the heavens looked on.

The struggle ended at the Cross: "And the hostile princes and rulers He shook off from Himself, and boldly displayed them as His conquests, when by the Cross He triumphed over them" (Col. 2:15, Weymouth).

There never could be any doubt as to the outcome of this struggle. Love must triumph for love is omnipotent. But love could triumph through Christ only as it triumphed first and always and absolutely in Him. And it is this triumph of perfect love in Christ—His life of perfect love and obedience to the Father lived in the midst of this Cosmos ruled by Satan—that God has given us for an example.

He counted nothing external—possessions, comfort, glory—to have any value except as tools for the accomplishment of love's purposes. And if they did not serve as tools for love they must be cast aside. Even that which touched Himself, His own person, His own being—dignity, honour, reputation, feelings, rights, justice, life itself—was of infinitely less value and importance than the fulfilment of love's objective. That fulfilment was the one great essential to which all else must be subservient for in it was

bound up the very character and existence of love itself. If anything had been regarded of greater value, if anything had been permitted to prevent the fulfilment of love's purpose, love would have failed, and if love failed, then true, perfect love does not exist. If that were so, if perfect love were but a vision and God is not perfect love, then man is undone, all light is gone out and hope and faith must die. For these three, faith, hope and love, stand or fall together. And the greatest of them is love for upon it all else depends.

On earth, Christ called His disciples His "friends". He was their Friend; He sought their friendship. Their waywardness, their slowness of understanding, their doubting, their failure to fellowship with Him in the hour of His agony, their forsaking Him and leaving Him to go alone to the Cross—none of these things made His love grow tired. "Having loved His own, He loved them unto the end".

His perfect love found not the response of perfect love in them. In the great final test, perfect love stood alone. There was none to fellowship with Him, for none other loved with a perfect love. Self-love still was in their hearts. Yet that did not cause love to fail: the Friend had no friends, but He was still the faithful Friend.

But that was not all. "He was tempted like as we are, yet without sin". Satan exerted the utmost of his cunning, his cruelty and his power to mar this image of God, to discover in it some flaw, some manifestation of self-love. "The prince of the Cosmos cometh but he hath nothing in me."

At the Cross, nothing was omitted that could humiliate Him. He was falsely accused, unjustly condemned. He was cruelly scourged, spat upon, the hair was plucked from His face. He, the true King, was dressed in a purple robe and a crown of thorns and ridiculed. But there was nothing of self-love in Him; just the majesty of perfect love that made the centurion say, "Truly this man was the Son of God".

His earthly body was yielded a sacrifice. Upon Him on the Cross was laid the sin of the world. Upon Him the judgment fell. He was the Substitute; in Him the law of love was fully satisfied.

That body was laid in an earthly tomb. But on the third day was manifested the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice when, "according to the working of His mighty power . . . He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all power and might and dominion"

(Eph. 1:19-21). "He humbled Himself... wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him".

And so that body in which the Image was manifested sits at the right hand of God, a perpetual sacrifice, an eternal Substitute making unceasing intercession for sinners loved with a perfect love.

Love's Purpose

When the likeness that God had made of Himself in Eden was ruined, love's purpose was not thwarted. There is no power so great as perfect love; no power can prevent the accomplishment of its purposes. It may have to wait many days—centuries, millenniums—but it never changes, it never grows weary, it never sleeps, it never loses patience, it never loses hope, its faith is eternal.

The promise that God had given to fallen man in Eden was fulfilled in Christ. By Him, Adam's sin was cancelled. He took upon Himself the sin, provided in His own body the sinless substitute and bore the penalty in death.

But the granting of pardon did not fulfil love's purpose. The freeing of the sinner from the guilt of sin did not fulfil it. These merely removed the barrier to its fulfilment. Love's purpose could be nothing less than the rebirth in man of perfect love. Nothing less could restore the communion of love; nothing less could satisfy love's holiness.

Christ's sacrifice on the Cross opened the way for the next step in the carrying out of God's great purpose—the manifestation of His image in man. "To as many as did receive Him, to them He gave authority to become sons of God—to those believing in His Name" (John 1:12, Young's Lit. Transl.). In these was wrought the new birth as God's Spirit entered into them and they became "partakers of the Divine nature".

"Before the foundation of the world", love's purpose had been set: it was that we, now, "should be conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). So in us, in whom Christ dwells, the image is formed again. We are now partakers of the nature of the God of perfect love. The Spirit of Christ, who is perfect love, dwells within us.

To His "brethren", just before He went to the Cross to finish His work of love, Christ said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another" (John 13:34); "This is My commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12). Until then there had been two basic commandments;

now a third is added. Among His bretbren, the members of His Church, the Body in which He dwells, perfect love is to reign: it is to be its life, its power, and through it God is to be manifested.

Paul's prayer for the members of the Church was that, through the indwelling Christ, "having your root and your foundation in love, you may be enabled, with all the saints, to comprehend the breadth and length, and depth and height thereof; and to know the love of God which passes knowledge, that ye may be filled therewith, even to the measure of the fulness of God" (Eph. 3:17-19, Conybeare). God's purpose for the Church's life is "that we should live in truth and in love, and should grow up in every part to the measure of His growth, who is our Head, even Christ. From whom the whole body (being knit together and compacted by all its joints) derives its continued growth in the working of His bounty, which supplies its needs, according to the measure of each several part, that it may build itself up in love" (Eph. 4:15, 16, Conybeare). The close of our Lord's prayer for His own was, "that the love with which Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and that I may be in them" (John 17:26, Weymouth).

The practical manifestation of this love in the Body of Christ is seen in the twelfth to the fourteenth chapters of First Corinthians. The members of this Body are all "members one of another", having "the same care one of another". The gift of each is used for the benefit of all and none regards his gift as superior to that of another. When one member suffers, all suffer with it; when one is honoured, all rejoice together. In all their work, love is the impelling motive. Without love, their ministry is an empty pretense. And it is true love that must reign; the love in which there is no boasting heart of self, no envy or self-seeking; love that is pure, kind, patient, never failing, enduring all things and believing with the confidence of faith that is eternal. And what is all this but the manifestation of the character of the God of love? It is Christ manifesting His image in the Body which He has purchased.

The Purpose Fulfilled

However, the day of the perfect fulfilment of God's purpose of love in His redeemed ones is not yet. For "we ourselves, though we possess the Spirit as a foretaste and pledge of the glorious future, yet we ourselves inwardly sigh, as we wait and long for open recognition as sons through the deliverance of our bodies" (Rom. 8:23, Weymouth). We tabernacle still in "this body of

death", and we look toward the day when we shall be clothed upon with immortality, when we shall rise with bodies like unto His glorious, resurrection body: bodies in which the law of sin and death will be present no more; bodies formed again in the likeness of God. "For as we have borne the image of the earthly, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor. 15:49).

In that day, when we are caught up "to meet the Lord in the air, to be with Him forever, "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied", for then we shall be presented perfect in the presence of His glory—"holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. 1:4). Then, the redemptive work of perfect love having borne its perfect fruit, He and we shall enter into the eternal fellowship of perfect love, a fellowship that shall find its full expression and its highest satisfaction in the carrying out together of the eternal purposes of love in the ages to come.

"When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away . . . And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (1 Cor. 13:10, 13).

THE EMOTIONS

Love - the Basic Emotion

from which all other emotions are derived.

Two Kinds of Love -

Perfect Love and Self-love

Some emotions produced by self-love appear to be identical with those produced by perfect love, but their origin and nature are entirely different.

SOME EMOTIONS DERIVED FROM BOTH

Perfect Love

(Here the emotion expresses the feeling of perfect love. In it no self-love or self-interest enters.

It is the fruit of the tree of life, perfectly pure and bringing life.

The whole being, spirit, soul and body, participates in its expression.)

Joy
Happiness
Pleasure
Anger
Hatred
Sympathy
Hope
Pity
Sorrow

Self-love

(Here the emotion expresses the feeling of self-love. In its heart is self-love and self-interest.

It is the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, impure and bringing death.

Soul and body only participate in its expression.)

Joy
Happiness
Pleasure
Anger
Hatred
Sympathy
Hope
Pity
Sorrow

Examples of Emotions Derived Only from Self-love

Fear
Envy
Jealousy
Discouragement
Despair

CHAPTER XI

THE EMOTIONS

The basic emotion is love, and that we have already considered. All the other emotions, such as fear, anger, hate, envy, joy, sorrow, despair, are derived from love—either from true love or self-love. Naturally there is a great difference between emotions derived from perfect love and emotions that are the product of self-love. They are entirely different in their nature though they may go under the same name and sometimes, at first sight, appear identical. Those produced by perfect love are good; those produced by self-love are harmful and sinful. Where perfect love reigns the emotions of self-love will have no place.

For instance, we are told that "perfect love casteth out fear". Fear is a fruit of self-love. Perfect love gives perfect confidence and where there is perfect confidence there can be no fear. When Peter walked upon the water and began to be afraid, his fear was only a symptom: he did not have the perfect confidence of perfect love: he did not have love's faith. The perfect confidence of a perfect love to God will deliver us from all fear. It was so with our Lord. Discouragement and despair are the fruit of fear. Where there is the confidence of love, they cannot exist. He who trusts God is of good courage; instead of downheartedness, there is "good cheer"; instead of grumbling there is praise.

Sorrow, anger, hate and joy are produced by either love or self-love. Our Lord sorrowed, and sometimes His sorrow was very deep. He sorrowed over His people Israel in their blindness and rejection of God's love and He sorrowed in the Garden of Gethsemane. Love sorrows with those who sorrow and for those who wilfully take the way of sin and reap its suffering and death. But love's sorrow has no bitterness or despair or selfishness in it. In Christ's sorrow, there was hope. While it recognised the suffering brought by sin, it knew that sin's day would end and all tears he wiped away. Self-love sorrows for self; its tears are for itself; its desire is for its own benefit. In it there is bitterness and despair.

Our Lord also showed anger: an anger to which His whole soul and Spirit responded. The Pharisees knew the unsparing lash of His scorn. There is anger that is not sinful: "Be ye angry and sin not", we are told. The hypocrisy of the Pharisees roused anger in Christ's heart. It will always rouse the anger of true love. But in our Lord's anger there was no resentment. It was not the

hurt flesh that was angry, and the anger was not against the Pharisees themselves but against their sin. It did not affect Christ's love towards the Pharisees. When He was on the Cross, although they had a large part in that cruel work, He included them when He said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do". Sinful anger is fleshly. It is self-love that is offended and manifests its resentment against the offender. Sinless anger is the anger of perfect love against that which is hateful to love, but it never affects the manifestation of true love towards the sinner. In it there is no personal resentment or bitterness.

Hatred is a deeper and more permanent emotion than anger. Anger is the reaction of love to some manifestation of sin; hatred is love's reaction to sin. Love hates that which is contrary to love. Love is pure, kind, true, just, patient, humble. It hates impurity, falseness, cruelty, injustice, pride. Self-love also hates: it hates that which is contrary to its nature. Therefore, it hates perfect love. Perfect love testifies against it. Where perfect love reigns, none of the fruits of self-love can be tolerated; there self-love must die. Therefore self-love must hate perfect love. For self-love to hate true love with a deadly hatred is just as natural and inevitable as for love to hate self-love.

In self-love's hate, self is always dominant. It hates that which it considers injures it and its hatred is against the person involved. In it there is personal resentment and bitterness. It is a hatred that demands personal satisfaction, at the cost of truth and justice if necessary. In its heart, self alone reigns. Of it is the "root of bitterness" which, even in the believer, can produce the deadliest fruit. It can blind the mind to the most elementary principles of right so that almost any falseness and wrong is justified.

God's hatred of sin is told in the strongest language. It is uncompromising and terrible. He will not rest until His Universe has been cleansed of its every stain. But His hatred touches not the sinner. For the sinner's salvation there is nothing He is not willing to sacrifice. He continues to love the sinner with a perfect love—a love that will never rest until the utmost has been done to save the sinner from his sin, no matter what may be the personal cost.

Joy may be true and pure or it may be false and sinful, depending upon whether it springs from true love or self-love. There is holy joy: the joy of Heaven in the realization of love's purpose of mercy. "For the joy that was set before Him" Christ endured

the Cross and despised the shame. There is the joy that comes from love's fellowship as when those who love the Lord meet together and rejoice together, and there is the supreme joy of fellowship in love's ministry. The Lord's purpose for us is that our "joy may be full". He said that even in persecution those who are His should "rejoice and be exceeding glad". "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich and he addeth no sorrow with it" (Prov. 10:22).

But there is a joy that has its roots in self-love: the joy of some benefit obtained for self, of sinful gain, of sinful pleasure; the joy of the miser; the joy of revenge. Of such joy God says, "The triumphing of the wicked is short and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment" (Job. 20:5); "Even in laughter, the heart is sorrowful and the end of that mirth is heaviness" (Prov. 14:13).

Those who know the two kinds of joy know how great is the difference between them. The one is lasting, wholly satisfying, the other mocks even while it charms.

We can judge any emotion by the same principles. It is not difficult to perceive of which tree it is the fruit. Nor is it difficult to see what springs from the seed which it bears.

In a heart in which Christ's love reigns every emotion is rooted in true love. It affects the whole of that person's attitude towards men. Paul said, "For the love of Christ constrains me, because I thus have judged, that if one died for all, then all died (in Him); and that He died for all, that the living might live no longer to themselves, but to Him, who, for their sakes, died and rose again. I, therefore, from henceforth, view no man carnally; yet, though once my view of Christ was carnal, yet now it is no longer carnal" (2 Cor. 5:14-16, Conybeare).

Before his conversion, Paul had judged the Lord from a carnal standpoint and hated and despised Him. After his conversion, his judgment of the Lord was no longer carnal but spiritual and he loved Him with his whole heart. Loving Christ, he saw Him as altogether lovely. And now, he says, he judges no man carnally; now he judges all men spiritually. He sees men only as those for whom Christ died, to whom he must be a witness, living no longer to himself. He sees all men as Christ sees them. Their sin he hates, but them he loves as Christ loves them and he is ready to sacrifice himself as Christ's messenger to them to declare God's love unto them. He is ready to bear with their opposition and persecution, to endure with patience, counting it all joy to serve as Christ served.

And such must be the attitude of all in whom Christ dwells

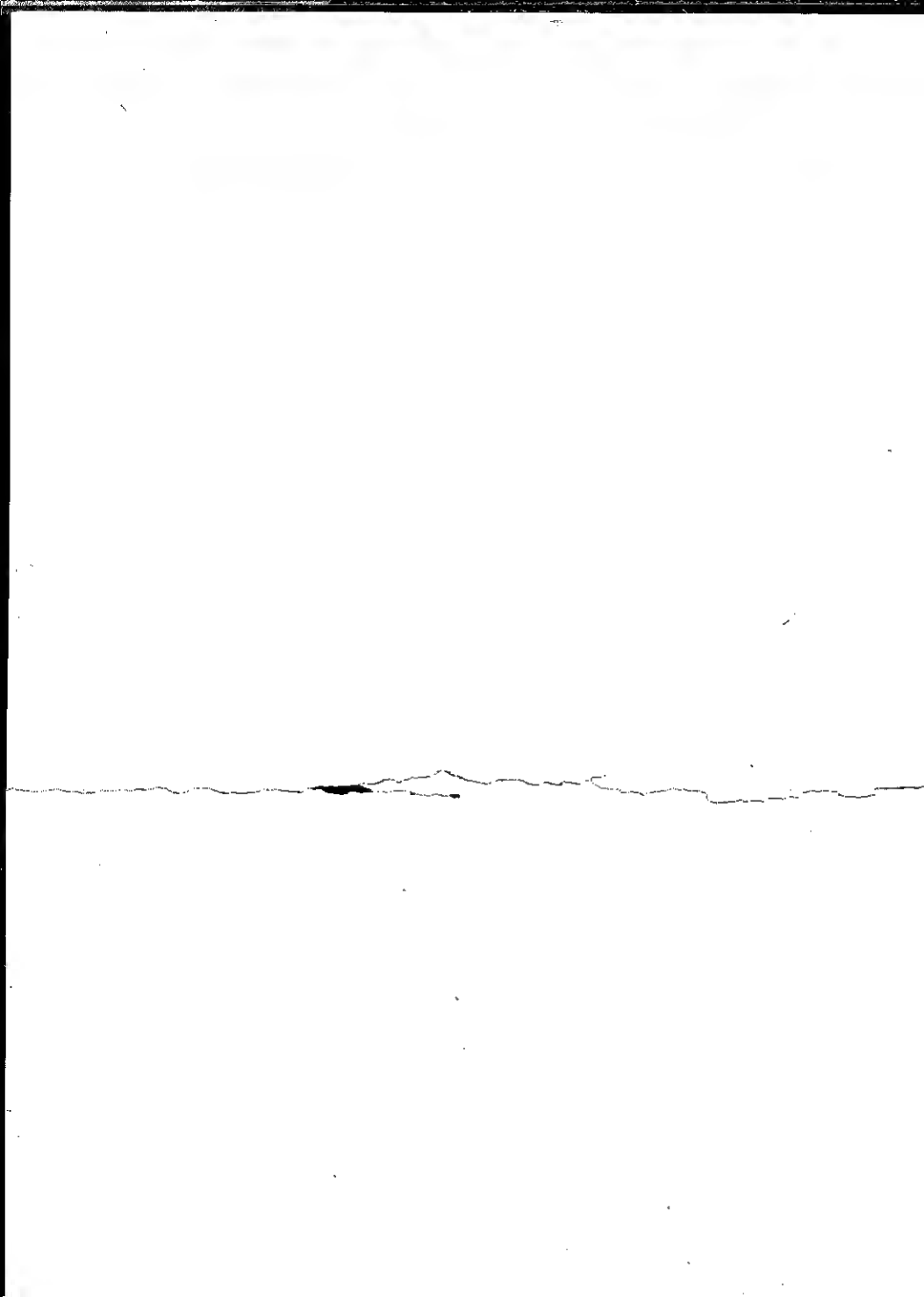
towards the sinner and towards his sin. Thus must all the emotions derived from love be used and manifested as holy instruments of the righteousness and glorious purpose of true love.

PART III

THE COSMOS AND THE CROSS

"Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this Cosmos". — Jn. 18:36.

"The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the Cosmos is crucified unto me and I unto the Cosmos". — Gal. 6:14.



CHAPTER XII

GOD'S WITNESS IN THE COSMOS

God's purpose is the restoring of His image in fallen man and to that purpose He has maintained a witness among men. Before man's fall the economy in which he lived had three fundamental characteristics: the law of perfect love ruled supreme, man manifested the likeness of God and God's government of man was a theocracy. It is to these three fundamentals that God has preserved a witness.

The purpose for which God called and separated His people, the Jews, was that this three-fold witness should be given through them. Today, in the Church, His purpose is the same, although now a more glorious witness is possible because the promised sacrifice has been made and Christ, by the Spirit, dwells in His people.

The structure of the Church of the indwelling Christ is built upon these three fundamentals:

(1) The old law of all laws rules—to love God with all the heart, mind and strength and one's neighbour as oneself. To His people Christ gave "a new commandment: that ye love one another". The believer's obedience to Him is based upon love: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments".

(2) In each member of the Church God's purpose is the forming and manifesting of the image of Christ that in the Church, His Body, may be seen "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ", "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:10, 11; 4:13).

(3) The government of the Church is theocratic. Christ is present personally in every true gathering of the Church and His will must be known by the Church and carried out by Him through the Church (Matt. 18:19, 20; Eph. 4:15, 16; 1 Cor. 12:1-18).

Naturally, Satan's efforts are directed ceaselessly to the compromising or the destruction of this three-fold witness of the Church. He seeks that self-love be substituted for perfect love, (bringing division and strife), that man be manifested and not Christ (man's wisdom, talents, works and glory), and that man take the government out of Christ's hands into his own (introducing into the Church, in place of Christ's theocratic govern-

ment, the three forms of human government—autocracy, oligarchy and democracy). So we find self exalted, man's building erected, and man's authority ruling.

But God also is active, His Spirit ever working to purify His witness. Though He never takes from man the freedom of his will, yet God makes His voice heard and intervenes continually, leading and overruling.

When God Intervenes

God's sovereign control is exercised over both man and nature. Man in the Cosmos is under the law of the Cosmos. Nature is governed by what are usually termed the laws of nature. It is generally considered that God established these laws, that they have continued as they are since the creation and that they are inviolable.¹

It is true that God established laws in nature, but not as they are at present. The great basic law of all laws that governs God's universe is the law of love and the laws which He instituted in nature obeyed that law. They were expressions of it. But now that law is rejected and the laws of nature are made to serve another law—the law of self-interest—with the result that, to no small extent, they have been subverted and made to produce death instead of life. "We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." The promise of God is that it "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God". "We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness". So great is the damage wrought that God says, "Behold I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Rom. 8:19-22; Isa. 65:17; 2 Pet. 3:13).

God's attitude to the laws of nature in their present state is an interesting study. There is much said about it in Scripture and it has always been consistent. Satan and his law are permitted to rule over rebel man. Yet God in His love and sovereignty causes much to remain that is for man's good. To the extent that, in the perfect wisdom of love, He sees it is wise, He overrules Satan's law for man's good.

A direct intervention of God is called a miracle. This is generally considered to be a violation of the laws of nature. But

¹ Modern science, however, is not so certain about the inviolability of nature's laws. Indeed, it does not now speak of laws but of "probabilities".

is it? In the first place, God did not establish these laws as they are at present. In the second place, His interventions never violate the great fundamental law but sustain it.

As soon as any law contradicts the fundamental law it becomes lawless, morally wrong and unjustifiable. When God intervenes, setting aside a law of nature that the purpose of perfect love shall be brought about, producing life and preventing death, He is not violating His own law. He never violates or sets aside His law; He intervenes to cause law to prevail against lawlessness.

To what extent may perfect love intervene in this Cosmos? It may do so to the extent that the purposes of perfect love are carried out. It can never do otherwise. It can never violate the law of perfect justice. It can never contradict itself.

In Christ's life upon earth the extent and limitations of the intervention of perfect love in the laws of nature are clearly shown. The reasons for it and God's authority and power to do it are made plain. It was always and only for the carrying out of love's true work. For what was not love's true work, Christ refused 'to give a sign'. When love's work was best accomplished by permitting Satan's rebel law to function, Divine intervention was withheld and our Lord was crucified and died upon the Cross. But then He was raised from the dead by the power of the Spirit of God.

In man also God intervenes directly. God is a Spirit and His activities are supernatural. His Spirit enters into those who put their trust in Him. He makes spiritual activity possible to them: "God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). The faith and activity of the Christian is supernatural. His foe also is supernatural (Eph. 6:12). Satan and his demons intervene actively and directly. But this we shall consider in a later chapter. Thus the Cosmos is the object of a mighty spiritual warfare in which God, Satan and man are engaged.

So, while we trace in the history of the Cosmos the efforts of Satan and man to govern without God upon the principle of self-interest, we see also the mighty hand of God acting upon the principle of perfect love and building that which shall ultimately bring all Satan's work to naught and consummate God's glorious masterwork.

While Satan has been occupied in seeking to remedy the incurable defects of his system and to establish a perfect government of his Cosmos on the basis of self-interest, he has also been employing the utmost of his wisdom and cunning and hate to

thwart God's purpose, destroy His work and banish His Name from the earth. He must do so. For the success of his own plan, it is essential that he do so.

Since the Fall, God has maintained a witness among men. His hand of love has ever been extended to those who would turn to Him and, despite all that Satan has been able to do, there has continued to exist within this Cosmos a testimony to the purpose and power of perfect love. The testimony has been faint at times and reduced in number, but it has never been utterly destroyed.

Religious Self-love

Satan has employed two main methods in his endeavour to rid his Cosmos of this testimony. Abel he slew, and many since then, including the Son of Man. In other cases, he offers a substitute—a religion of human works: a worship based upon the Satanic principle of self-love. Such was Cain's religion; and Cain was the instrument he used to slay Abel.

A similar situation is witnessed at the Cross. Our Lord had declared the religion of the Pharisees to be soulish and Satanic in principle. "Full well ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your own tradition . . . making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition" (Mark 7:9, 13). "Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear My word. Ye are of your father the devil and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth ye believe Me not" (Jn. 8:43-45). "They love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets that they may be seen of men . . . they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast" (Matt. 6:5, 16). "But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments and love the uppermost rooms at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues and greetings in the markets and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi" (Matt. 23:5-7). The principle of that religion was self-love and Christ laid bare its true character.

Satan had permitted the Pharisees to retain all the framework of their religion, but his principle, not God's principle, was now its basis. Ceremonies, prayers, good works wrought by the flesh for self-interest and self-glory—such was the substitute which Satan had given them. And it was those who practised that

substitute that were the instruments Satan used to crucify Christ.

Satanic Substitutes

Is all this not deeply significant and revealing as we consider the religious situation in the world today and even the religious situation within the Church? The Spirit's prophecy was that in the Church today a similar substitute based upon the Satanic principle would prevail: "Accordingly, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, before long I will vomit you out of My mouth. You say, I am rich, and have wealth stored up, and I stand in need of nothing, and you do not know that if there is a wretched creature it is you—pitiable, poor, blind, naked" (Rev. 3:16, 17, Weymouth).

It is not difficult to recognize Satan's substitute religions. There are very many of them, varying in form to suit every taste. They are intended to satisfy the superstitious, emotional and aesthetic instincts of the soulish man, while conforming fully to the Satanic principle of the Cosmos. Within the professing Church are many of them. The Apostle Paul describes them as strongholds of man's reasonings (2 Cor. 10:4, 5, margin). They profess to accept the Christian hope and faith, but as our Lord said of such, quoting Isaiah, "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth and honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me" (Matt. 15:7-9). Their heart is full of self; in it is not love to God but self-love. Such substitutes for the true faith are called "doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. 4:1). Demons (knowing-ones), with their darkened wisdom, have inspired them.

Paul exposed the true basis of these man-conceived substitutes: "I tell you that they who wish to have a good repute in things pertaining to the flesh, they, and they alone, are forcing circumcision upon you; and that only to save themselves from the persecutions which Christ bore upon the Cross... they wish to have you circumcised that your obedience to the fleshly ordinance may give them a ground of boasting" (Gal. 6:12, 13, Conybeare). Self-interest, self-glory, soulish works—all are there. It was of the Cosmos, of Satan's order—and that despite the great claims of doctrinal correctness and the tireless zeal of its advocates.

Corrupting the truth so effectively mars it that that device often serves Satan's purpose far better than opposition. The substitutes for the true faith that exist today are too numerous to list here. Demons, or evil spirits, are unceasingly active, introducing whatever variation may appeal to the heart and mind of man.

What is called Modernism (modern rationalism) in all its forms, is Satan's offer to the so-called modern, cultured intellect. It says: Believe in a modern, reasonable God of love, discard the old-fashioned belief in Satan and the depravity of man's heart and sin and punishment and redemption through sacrifice, exalt the glory of man, recognize divinity in man (make him a god), accept Jesus as a great man (but just a man) and practise love to all men by your good works wrought by your own cultured mind, your own highly developed modern wisdom and strength. All this is purely of the Cosmos, Satanic, for it is just what Satan offered man in Eden, and its appeal to the soulish heart and mind has fascinated and deluded many.

Soulsh Fundamentalism

However, great as has been the evil wrought by Modernism and other recognized Satanic substitutes, there are other even more subtle and deadly, because less readily recognized, soulsh and Satanic substitutes. They produce the deadness of many an orthodox church, the soulshness of many a fundamentalist congregation. They produce a Modernism that is doctrinally sound, sometimes proudly so, and even aggressively so. Always, it is soulsh, living, worshipping, serving, ministering, campaigning in the soulsh realm with soulsh wisdom and power. Its life, its wisdom and its power, are not truly of the Spirit. It may be highly correct and respectable, or it may be proudly fundamental, or it may organize 'revivals', but it is to a great extent the soul in activity, not the Holy Spirit at work. In its spirit it is proud, self-satisfied, often contentious and lacking in the love of Christ.

To the orthodox Christian who wishes to be dignified and respectable in the eyes of men, Satan says: "What Paul said about not using enticing words of man's wisdom but preaching only in the power and demonstration of the Spirit was alright for him and his age, but you must remember that man has greatly advanced since Paul's day and modern attainments and culture make it necessary to use modern methods. The solemnity of your form of worship, the architectural beauty of your church edifice, the comfort of your pews, the magnificence of your spire, the far-reaching tones of your carillon, the beautiful music of your great organ, the high-quality performance of your choir, the well-dressed and intellectual appearance of your congregation and the eloquence, personality and learning of your preacher—these are the elements of true religion and the things most acceptable to God; in them is spiritual power". And so even

within the doctrinely orthodox Church Satan establishes the religion of Cain.

Then to the one who would campaign against doctrinal error, Satan's offer is: "Fight the unfaithful on their own ground, expose their error, throw all your weight into the contest, use your ability and knowledge and intelligence to denounce, to argue, to persuade and to organize. Employ your soul-powers to the utmost. God needs bold champions who can fight error for Him. Be a hero of the faith". And so the crusader fights carnally and does great harm to the Lord's work.

To the preacher of the Gospel, Satan's advice is: "Organize a big thing. Prayer and faith and the power of the Holy Spirit are alright, but it really depends on you. Be a successful preacher, put pep into your sermons; use psychology. Acquire the art of swaying the crowd. Make your message and meeting attractive and entertaining. Master the secret of moving men by your eloquence and wisdom. Learn how to manage men.

It all sounds plausible; in fact, it is all true in the realm of the soul. To the soulish intelligence it is understandable, to human experience it is practical, to the soulish heart it is satisfying. The soul would be religious. The soul would be a defender of the faith. The soul would be a successful preacher. The soul would establish the Kingdom of God upon earth. The soul, instead of being an entirely humble and yielded instrument used by the Spirit of God, would do God's work for Him in its own way and strength—and glory in it.

Thus Satan succeeds in persuading God's people to offer to God worship and service that are not the fruit of the Spirit but of the soul. They are the fruit of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" and the seed which is borne has death in its heart. They belong to that which the "two-edged sword" would cut away. They are based upon the principle of self-love—the principle of Satan's Cosmos.

To soulish service, further consideration will be given in a later chapter.

CHAPTER XIII

THE MEANING OF THE CROSS

We must distinguish between the true Cross of Christ and what many call the Cross. The meaning of the Cross of Christ is clearly revealed in God's Word. Its significance and its value is that which God has put upon it, and it can have no other. But man has placed different valuations and interpretations upon it. It has, in fact, in the thoughts of many, become legendary, surrounded with fables, its true meaning obscured.

To many, the Cross is a talisman; to multitudes it is a fetish. The spiritually ignorant Catholic peasant plait a cross of straw and attaches it to the tail of his bullock to cure it of maggots. He makes the sign of the Cross to ward off evil spirits. He believes a cross of wood or metal has power to work miracles.

In Catholic lands the Cross has become not only the symbol of religion but the banner of nationalism. In Spain's long wars against the Saracens, the Cross was to her armies what the crescent was to theirs. At the foot of this symbol the tortures of the Inquisition were enacted. It was the banner of conquest of the *Conquistador* as he sought gold and lands in the new world. Before it the Indian was obliged to bow or perish.

The Protestant church-member's estimate of the Cross is not so crude. The influence of the teaching of the Bible saves him usually from weaving superstition around a symbol. Yet to how many it is little more than the symbol of a great sacrifice—a sacrifice that may well-nigh be equalled by the soldier on the battlefield!

To the humble and sincere believer in Christ such conceptions of His Cross are abhorrent. They mean all that the Cross would save man from: all that made it necessary. How different is the Cross of Christ to this man-conceived Cross. But how little wonder is it that Satan has sought in so many ways to substitute another Cross to blind men's eyes that the true Cross of Christ should not be known.

Why should Satan's substitute, so false and so crude, be so effective, so readily accepted and, often, so fanatically defended? It is because it is a Cross without the offence. It is a Cross that does not judge man; that does not condemn him. It is a Cross that permits the flesh to live; which the flesh may serve. It is a Cross that the flesh can carry to its own glory. The greatest manifestation of perfect love is made something that the soul

in which self-love exists can produce. Thus the Cross, instead of being the symbol of the most glorious fruit borne by "the tree of life", is degraded into something that is a fruit of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil".

The sincere believer in Christ, whose faith rests upon the finished work of Christ and who knows that he is born again by the Holy Spirit, will say: "Such a substitute Cross has no attractions for me". Satan knows it has not, and he does not offer it. But he does offer a substitute Cross to the believer. He may not be able to take away from him the Cross of Christ on which his sin was purged and upon which his faith rests for eternal life: the Cross which means his salvation; but how successful he is in taking away the Cross of Christ for the believer's life! How many of God's people do not know and do not experience the meaning and the power of the Cross of Christ in their daily lives!

The believer may think that he does know. He will speak of the "crosses" he is called upon to bear—difficulties, trials, petty annoyances. But are these the Cross of Christ? No, they are not. They may be instruments that God would use to apply the Cross of Christ to the believer's life, but they are not the Cross, and it is unscriptural and untrue to speak of them as such. The Apostle Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was not the Cross to him; it kept him at the Cross. Having not where to lay His head was not the Cross to our Lord; it was but a step toward it, an incident along the way of the Cross.

The Cross of Christ in the believer's life is something infinitely vaster and more fundamental in its significance than any trial or difficulty. It is death, utter, complete, all-embracing; it is life: Christ's life, full, abounding, dynamic, triumphant. In the believer it is the consummation of the work of God's Word, the two-edged sword, in dividing between that which is of the soul and that which is of the Spirit.

When our Lord said to His disciples, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me," what did He mean by the Cross? What did Paul mean by the Cross when he stated: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the Cosmos is crucified unto me and I unto the Cosmos"; or when he declared, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"? Neither our Lord nor His servant, Paul, were speaking of the difficulties and trials of the Christian life. They were speaking of the Cross of Christ.

Peter Rejects the Cross

The circumstances surrounding our Lord's first declaration made to His disciples concerning the Cross are exceedingly important for they manifest the central and essential place which the Cross occupies in relation to the Church and to Satan's warfare against the Church.

Peter had just made his great confession: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God". That light had not come from Peter's reasoning. Christ said to him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in heaven". Then, Peter having received this revelation, our Lord went on to teach the relation that Peter, and all those who would come to know this truth, would have to Him as the Son of the living God. "And I also say unto thee, That thou art Peter (*petros*—a piece of rock) and upon this rock (*petra*—an entire rock) I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:16-18).

Peter explains the significance of this statement in his first Epistle: "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:4, 5).

Christ, the Son of the living God, is the living rock and Peter and all those who believe on Christ are, as it were, pieces of that living rock—indwelt by Christ, partakers of His nature and manifesting Him. Thus Christ taught the great truth of our oneness with Him and that the Church was to be "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:23).

Christ declared that the "gates of hell" will not prevail against the Church He would build—built upon Himself and constructed of those who were indwelt by Him. Satan would wage war against it but would not be able to overthrow it.

As the Church is in God's eternal purpose, is Christ's work and manifests Him in this world, it is to be expected that Satan's greatest efforts will be directed to its defeat and destruction. So, immediately following Christ's declaration, Satan attacks and we see the method of the warfare he is to wage.

After giving His disciples this teaching concerning the Church, Christ began to tell them that before Him was death—the death of the Cross: "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests and scribes, and be

killed, and after three days rise again" (Mark 8:31). For the bringing into being of the Church the Cross was necessary.

Peter was shocked and rebuked Him, saying, "Be it far from thee Lord (margin: pity thyself); this shall not be unto thee".

Our Lord's stern reply was: "Get thee behind Me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of man . . . If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. 16:13-25).

Peter had received revelation from God. He was a piece of the Rock, knowing Christ and believing in Him. But now it is Satan who speaks through him.

Between him and Christ there appears a deep, fundamental difference of attitude. Peter is shocked at the Lord's attitude and the Lord's reaction to Peter's thought shows that He is moved to the depths of His being. They love each other yet each is an offence to the other.

It had seemed that Peter knew Christ and that since he had declared his faith in him all would go well from that point. He did know Him—and yet he did not. He knew and believed the truth concerning Him but he did not yet accept the living Christ within him.

Peter had loved the Lord from the day that he met Him and had immediately left his fishing to follow Him in a life of faith and the sacrifice of material things. He could say to the Lord, "Have we not left all to follow Thee?" His love was such that he was willing to give up all, even life itself for his Lord.

And yet there was this deep chasm between them. Long afterwards Peter wrote, "Unto you which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient He is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient" (1 Pet. 2:8). He remembered the day when he stumbled at the Word, being disobedient, and Christ was a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to him.

After His rebuke to Peter, the Lord made it clear to His disciples what the ground of the difference was, "If any man will come after Me", He said, "let him deny himself and take up his Cross and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it".

Peter knew Christ and believed in Him but he was not willing to deny self and take up the Cross. So between him and Christ, who purposed to deny Himself and take up the Cross, there could

be no true understanding but a sharp difference of opinion. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross". Peter was not of one mind with his Lord.

The root problem was self-love. Peter wished to follow the Lord with self-love still permitted to live. He wanted a Christ without the Cross.

Peter's vision of the Christ was of one glorious and mighty among men; one whom he would proudly follow to victory. But the Cross with its absolute death of self, its terrible stigma of shame and condemnation and ostracism—no, that could not be! The offence of the Cross, he was not willing to accept. He judged with man's judgment and his thought was Satan's thought.

Let it not be thought that Peter had not been willing to give up much to follow Christ. He was a master fisherman with a fishing boat and hired help and he had left all at Christ's call. But the Cross was something that went far deeper than any material sacrifice. It meant the complete sacrifice, not of possessions, but of self. The one had reference to external things; the other struck within at all that was of the soul, demanding the ultimate sacrifice there. "Peter, you have given up all that you had; but that is not enough: YOU must die!" Peter was not prepared to do that—not yet.

It is here, on this ground, that Satan attacks the Church, through the heart and mind of any member in whom he finds that self is not denied. The Church of the Christ of the Cross must be formed of members in whom the crucified and risen Christ lives and Satan seeks to tempt the members to reject the Cross in their lives.

Peter Without the Cross

It is interesting to follow Peter from the time of his rejection of the Cross. His attitude and his actions are typical of those of the believer and the church member who is willing to yield all except himself, and the Lord's dealings with him and patience towards him are typical of the love and faith which He ever manifests to the believer whom Satan would defeat. Christ said that Satan would not triumph. For three years it seemed that the triumph was his, But it was not; the final triumph was Christ's.

Through the patience and faith of Christ's perfect love, Peter was led into victory.

At the Transfiguration, we see Peter "not knowing what to do . . . sore afraid" as he saw the manifestation of Christ's glory (Mark 9:6; Matt. 17). As Moses and Elias talked with Christ about the Cross, Peter understood not, but impulsively offered works—"Let us build three tabernacles", two of which would have been dedicated to the worship of men. In his confusion he did not remember that Christ had not told the disciples to build the Church but had said, "I will build My Church". He did not discern that it was in the believer that Christ was to dwell. He forgot that worship could not be given to men. He forgot that it was not in booths or high places or in buildings built by man, but "in Spirit and in truth" that God was to be worshipped. What he said now was Satan's voice as surely as when he rebuked Christ for saying that He must suffer the death of the Cross. Peter was not spiritual and it was not the Spirit of God that caused him to think as he thought. Again he "savoured not of the things of God but of the things of man".

While Peter "yet spake . . . behold a voice . . . which said, This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him". That voice was God's witness to His Son, God's seal upon the Cross about which Moses, Elias and Christ had just been speaking, and God's rebuke to the soulish religion of human works, the religion without the Cross, which Peter's proposal offered. The Church was to be Christ, not shrines or works.

We need not be amazed that Peter should make such a suggestion. Has man not always, after every manifestation of God's power, after every work wrought by the Holy Spirit, clumsily put his hands upon it, interpreting it in his own wisdom, organizing it according to his own ways, building altars upon which to offer soulish worship? Is the Church not full of such soulish organization today?

In what Peter suggested are all the principles of what later, through similar reasoning on the part of carnal believers, developed into the pomp, ritual and worship of saints of the Roman Catholic Church.

There was a shrine to Christ and one to Moses and one to Elias. There we have the worship of Christ and the saints at man-built, earthly shrines—all the essentials of the Church of Rome!

Again, we see Peter setting out in faith boldly to walk upon the sea. But his was still a faith the roots of which were imbedded in human wisdom and not in the Cross, and soon the evidence

of his own eyes (uncrucified), as he looked on the danger that surrounded him, and the judgment of his own mind (uncrucified), which told him that what he was doing could not be done, proved too strong for him and he believed them and not his Lord. And again he was afraid. The Lord immediately sustained him; but He rebuked him for his "doubts" and "little faith". So it is with every one who sets out in the walk of faith whose heart and mind are not wholly yielded to the Cross.

Cross-less Love

As Christ was passing through the agony in the Garden, Peter and his companions partook not with Him in His sufferings nor fellowshiped with Him in His conflict in prayer. They could not, for it concerned the Cross, which they had not yet accepted.

Our Lord had said to His disciples: "Where I go you cannot come", and Peter had protested, "I am willing to go with you to death". That was true: Peter did not lack animal courage and he sincerely loved his Lord. But it was Cross-less love. It was from a heart in which self was not crucified; therefore it was love that was limited by self-interest, weak and imperfect. He was willing to face death, but not the death which the Cross signified—the death of self. Our Lord knew Peter's love for Him, but He also knew that self-love still had the last word and He said, "Peter, this very night you will deny Me three times".

Peter was perfectly confident that he could go wherever Christ would go and endure whatever hardness there might be, but Christ knew that Peter's spiritual condition could result only in a complete breakdown when he was faced with any great trial. The result was inevitable. Such is the weakness of a Cross-less love. One who loves Christ but rejects the Cross is always weak.

All Peter's weaknesses and failures are generally attributed to his temperament. He was by nature impulsive, zealous, self-confident. But it was the same Peter that later walked in victory. That is, it was the same Peter by nature, but a Peter who had accepted the Cross, in whom the flesh was crucified. Through the Spirit there is victory for any temperament. The difficulty was not in Peter's character but in his heart. His actions and his weakness are typical of those of any other believer in the same spiritual condition.

When the soldiers and the servants of the High Priest burst upon Christ and His disciples in the Garden, Peter showed his physical courage and his human love. Drawing his sword, he struck in defence of his Lord. He would have died fighting if

necessary. But how completely he failed to understand. Again, with Cross-less human zeal, it was human works and human worship that he offered. The Lord had to command him to desist and then had to undo the harm that would have been wrought to the testimony of His Cross. As our Lord explained to Pilate later: "My kingdom is not of this Cosmos; if my kingdom were of this Cosmos, then would my servants fight . . ."

Peter, Lovest Thou Me?

It is in the light of all this that we must view our Lord's dealings with Peter after the resurrection. After the crucifixion Peter had failed again, as was only natural. He had said to his fellow-disciples, Thomas, Nathaniel, James and John, "I go a-fishing", and they answered, "We also go with thee". All seemed to be ended. Why continue the life of faith and of testimony? So they went back to their trade, back to what they had been doing before Christ called them.

They toiled all night and caught nothing. But lo, as morning was breaking over Galilee, Jesus stood upon the shore and called to them kindly, "Children, have you any meat?" They answered, "No". They had nothing. Vain had been their night of toil. Then He said, "Cast the net on the other side of the ship and ye shall find". They obeyed and secured a catch beyond the strength of their net to hold; yet the net was not broken.

Three years before, Christ had dealt with Peter, James and John in a very similar way when, after another night of fruitless toil, they had permitted Him to take the direction and their nets were filled to breaking (Luke 5:1-11). It was then that they had left all to follow Him to be fishers of men. Now the Lord has to begin all over again, repeating the same lesson on primary things. They had not recognized Him as He spoke to them from the shore, but seeing what had taken place, the memory of that day on the lake of Genesaret, of their call and of their forsaking all to follow their wonderful Lord, came flooding back.

Then John realized who it was that stood upon the shore and said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Again the ship and the fish with which it was laden lost all value. Abandoning it, caring not what happened to it, Peter leaped overboard and swam—back to his Lord's side. Though Peter had been weak, he did love the Lord, and the Lord knew it. When many had turned back and left Christ and He had asked, "Will ye also leave me", Peter had replied, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life". He loved, but not with a perfect love.

Then the Lord said to them all, "Come and dine". He already had food, but He added theirs to His and together they ate (Rev. 3:20).

This was but a prelude; a reiterated lesson in fishing—fishing in human wisdom and fishing under the direction of the Lord. It was a lesson in providing. When He called to them they again had nothing—nothing after another long night of their own effort. But how easily He provided. It was a reminder of what He had taught about the lily and the sparrow. It was a contrast between their knowledge and His knowledge, their power and His power, their work and His work. It was a renewal of fellowship. And they understood.

Then it was that the Lord faced Peter with the all-important question and probed down into the depths of his heart: "Peter do you care for Me more than these?" More than what? We are not sure; but does it matter? It matters not what we love more than we love the Lord, the result is the same. There was something that Peter had been loving more than he loved Christ.

Peter replied, "Lord, you know that I love you". Then said Christ, "Feed my lambs". Peter, if you love me why are you catching fish and not doing the work to which I called you? Again the Lord asked him, "Peter do you love me?" Peter said, "Yea, Lord, you know that I love you". "Then shepherd my sheep", said Christ. Fulfil your ministry, then, Peter! A third time the Lord questioned him, "Peter do you love me?" A few days before, Peter had denied Him three times. Now, at the thrice-repeated question, "Lovest thou me", he was grieved. What could he say? He had failed completely. He had turned aside from his calling. What evidence had he given of his love? The full import of Christ's question became clear to him and the sincere cry broke from his heart, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee".

What an appeal there is in these words! There is no self-assurance now. It is as if Peter said, "Lord, I cannot prove it, but you who know all things can see within my heart that, in spite of my weakness and utter failure, I do love you". Peter had surrendered. All self-confidence and ambition had gone and in its place was a truly humble heart.

With Peter's first two answers the Lord was not satisfied, but now He had won. Peter's whole heart was His. Then Christ said to him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thine hands and

another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. This spake he signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken thus, he saith unto him, "Follow Me" (John 21:3-19).

Peter had denied self and taken up the Cross and his Lord could say to him again, "Follow Me", and reveal to him the martyr's death that awaited him and that now, in Christ's strength, he would be able to face. Now he could be an instrument in the building of the Church of the Crucified Christ.

The love that Peter gave to his Lord now was from a heart to which the Cross had been applied. It was love in which self was crucified. It was true love. That was the love that Christ sought, the love He trusted.

Henceforth Peter was a changed man. Now it was Peter, filled with the Spirit, preaching the Gospel boldly in the streets of Jerusalem; Peter who stands before the High Priest and Council, fearlessly witnessing and refusing to obey man rather than God; Peter who said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee", for he counted it a privilege to live by faith and cared only for the riches that are greater than silver and gold. It is the Peter who, years later, wrote, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but, rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings: that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pet. 4:12, 13). In the Garden, Peter had not understood. Then, he could not enter into the "fellowship of the sufferings of Christ". But now he can and his deep joy springs from that fellowship. Now he and his Lord live and walk and work and suffer and rejoice together in a full, understanding communion of love.

Where Man Meets God

The Apostle Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). Again he said, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then, death worketh in us, but life in you" (2 Cor: 4:10-12).

There is no other way for the Christian to have life. He must

die daily if Christ's life is to be daily manifested in him and through him. And no partial yielding is of any avail; all that the Christian is must be "crucified with Christ".

But just what does all this involve? What did the Cross mean to Christ and what does the Cross mean to the believer? It is necessary that every believer know this. It is God's will that the Cross of Christ in its deepest and fullest significance should be understood by every one who is born of the Spirit, and we can be assured that to every humble seeker the hidden treasure will be revealed in all its richness and beauty.

The Cross of Christ—not the cross of wood but the truth of the Cross—is the mountain peak of God's acts; it is the supreme revelation of His love. It is the vehicle of all God's intercourse with man and man's intercourse with God. On the Cross, Perfect Love meets man and man meets Perfect Love; and only there can God and man meet. But more vital still is the fact that they can meet only through mutual participation in it. Perfect love must bear the Cross for man and man's self-love must die at the Cross. Peter never really knew Christ, never really understood Him or fellowshiped with Him, until he himself took up the Cross.

Man must take his place where Christ was condemned, reviled, mocked, thrust without the gate; where Christ hung upon the Cross; in the tomb where He was laid; in His resurrection from the dead; in His seated triumph in the Heavenlies. In Christ, at the Cross, he participates and fellowshiped in all that was wrought by God through the Cross. There he must die and there he enters into life.

All God's Word to man and all God's will for man centre in the Cross of Christ and flow from it. All doctrine, all truth, all power, all spiritual life spring from it and are inseparably bound up with it. They are so dependent upon it that they cannot be known or received or experienced apart from it.

The Cross of Christ

What did the Cross mean to Christ? In the first place it meant love. Love could atone for sin, therefore love must atone for it. It meant the ultimate expression of love: man's sin could be atoned for only by death. It meant obedience. Only a substitute could accomplish redemption and He alone could be that Substitute, so love made it necessary that He humble Himself and become "obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross" (Phil. 2:8).

But this death was far more than physical death. He, all that

He was, was yielded unto death. All that He was, was crucified. His self, His rights, His reputation, His feelings, His pride—all were yielded unto death. He accepted the Cross, the shameful and cruel branding of guilt and ignominy. He permitted Himself to be led outside the city gate as one unclean, banished, with all the marks of scorn, despal and contempt, from human society. He accepted what to men was the apparent defeat of all His plans. He was wrongfully accused, despitefully abused, insulted, spat upon, mocked, ridiculed, misunderstood, unjustly condemned. Nothing was omitted that would wound His personal pride. His love and His obedience were tested to the utmost. Was there in Him anything of the soul that was not utterly yielded, utterly obedient? Was He perfect love? Was there any self-love in Him? Did He in but one little thing demand a place for His own desire, His own comfort, a voice for His own thought, His own will, the consideration of His own right, His own merit? No, He "denied Himself and took up His Cross". The death of self had to be manifested before the offering of the body upon the Cross could be made. He had shown absolute love; He had rendered the obedience of perfect love; He had fulfilled the three commandments of love; to love God with all the heart, to love one's neighbour as oneself and to love the brethren. He was the Lamb without blemish.

Crucified, I Die

The Cross meant all this to our Lord. All this is the Cross of Christ. When He said, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his Cross and follow Me", this is what He meant. When Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ . . ." this is what he meant. The Cross of Christ has no other meaning.

The Cross of Christ demands death to all that the believer is in himself. It judges and condemns all that is of the fallen soul-life; all that is of man's work and wisdom and pride. It reveals, by the purity of its light, how deep rooted and complete is the depravity of the whole human soul and how hideous is its sin. In it we see the two-edged sword of the Word of God cutting between soul and Spirit, separating, penetrating to the most hidden recesses, sparing nothing that is of the flesh but cutting it away and revealing it to be what it is: flesh blighted by sin, rebellious, full of pride, lusting against the Spirit, selfish, always seeking its own, never willing to submit to God's authority and rule.

All the believer's difficulties and all the Church's lack of

power and light come from man's unwillingness to meet God on the Cross of Christ and from his constant endeavour to know God, to understand truth, to serve God, to exercise power and to fellowship with Christ on some other ground than that of the utter death of his own self-love.

"Crucified. . . I Live"

The Cross of Christ is the basic, essential fact in God's dealings with the believer. We can know God only as we know the Cross of Christ. We can understand God's Word only as we know the Cross of Christ. In all our preaching and teaching, in all our faith and prayer and service and warfare, we must act upon the Cross of Christ.

It is at the Cross that we fellowship with Him. He said that anyone who was not willing to meet Him there was not worthy of Him. Elsewhere we may talk about Him, the flesh may claim Him and offer worship to Him and profess to work for Him, but only there can we talk with Him and have Him speak to us and work through us. There the flesh cannot live, for Christ only lives.

Do we wonder that Peter shrank from the Cross of Christ when he first beheld it? Does not the natural heart in every believer shrink from it? Had Peter not finally yielded utterly to Christ in fulness of love and accepted the Cross, could the Holy Spirit have filled him and could the Lord have used him? We desire to fellowship deeply with our Lord, to be filled with the Spirit, to prevail in prayer, to have victory in our lives, to be used in service. It is all ours in Christ—on the Cross. There Peter entered into it. There Paul discovered it. There it waits for every believer: for everyone who will deny self and take up the Cross and follow his Lord.

CHAPTER XIV

GETHSEMANE

Our Lord was the manifestation of perfect love. He was perfect in His love to God, to man and to His "brethren". He was very God and very man and both in His Divine nature and as a man He manifested perfect love. Satan could find nothing in Him, either in His life or at the Cross: not the smallest evidence of self-love.

Christ came "not to be ministered unto but to minister". He humbled Himself to become a man, laying aside, as of infinitely lesser consequence, His Heavenly glory and became a servant, serving in love's obedience even to the death of the Cross.

When Satan, speaking through Peter, said, "Pity thyself", when our Lord told of the Cross that was before Him, the reaction of love was immediate: "Thou art an offence unto Me!" Christ's heart was stirred to its depths and His answer vibrates with utter indignation, repugnance and scorn. The advice was not just an expression of the weakness of the human heart, it was Satan's philosophy. A principle was involved so fundamental that not only God's will and Christ's whole ministry and testimony were threatened, but the very character of God. It was an invitation to self-love—the same invitation that was heard in Eden. To have placed His own interest and comfort before that of His neighbour would have been the complete negation of love, the negation of God's character. It would have meant the acceptance of the principle of self-interest, the rejection of the principle of love, the discrediting of God and the vindication of Satan. It would have proved the truth of the charge which Satan made against God to Eve in the Garden in Eden.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, we see Christ finally faced with the cost of this sacrifice. The veil is lifted that we may behold the nature and character of the Son of Man as He engages in the conflict. We look into the depths of His soul, amazed in awe and wonder and what we see fills us with great comfort and joy.

We see Him as God, omniscient, knowing the agony of the way that He must tread. But it is rather as man that He is revealed now; as He who took upon Himself our nature and suffered and was tempted in all points as we are, and yet, through the power of the Spirit, failed not in the manifestation of perfect love.

We see man—body, soul and spirit—face to face with the Cross,

We behold as the soul—mind, heart and will—wrestles with the demand of perfect love for an absolute sacrifice. We watch as the Son of Man, with His whole mind, heart and will, accepts the cost of fellowship in the ministry of perfect love.

In the account, the Holy Spirit has distinguished clearly between the three parts of man's being and the different faculties of the soul, and to fully understand what took place we must be careful to note the significance of these distinctions.

Our Lord sought the companionship of three of His disciples as far as they could go with Him. He greatly desired companionship: love requires it. But when He went to pray, there was none who could fellowship with Him. He must go forward alone. The Cross was His. The decision, the offering, and the cost were His alone; into these none other could enter. He must face them alone with God.

We are told that "He began to be sore amazed and to be very heavy". And He said to His three companions, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death; tarry ye here and watch". ("Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow.") The burden that bowed down His soul was very great.

It was His soul, not His Spirit, that was exceeding sorrowful unto death. Of the disciples who slept, He said, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak". In Him, the flesh was not weak. It suffered, but it was strong. His heart was not a fleshly heart: in it perfect love reigned. That love is seen not only in the strength given to His soul in the conflict but also in His patience—yea, understanding sympathy—towards His weak "friends" who could not watch with Him. He, the Great Friend, "loved them to the end"—for "love never faileth".

There was none who could even understand. Perfect love stood alone. There was no one to enter in with Him in a fellowship of perfect love in this hour of love's great sacrifice. The love of the disciples was still a very imperfect thing. It was night and their bodies were weary (though not so weary as His was) and they could not keep awake to watch with Him and to pray for Him. They did not understand the agony of soul or the deep meaning of the conflict. While He wrestled and the redemption of the world was at stake, they slept.

Christ's Questions to the Father

"And he went forward a little and fell on the ground, and prayed, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him."
"And there appeared an angel from heaven strengthening him,"

Alone as a man; absolutely alone. Yet not alone, for God sent His messenger to minister strength. But this did not lessen the cost, or the conflict of the soul. "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and the sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground". The body was racked by the anguish of His soul. The sacrifice is of the body as well as of the soul. To both, the cost is absolute. It was His all that was demanded. To triumph, love's sacrifice must be complete.

Jesus said, "O, my Father, all things are possible unto thee; if thou be willing, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt" (combining the statements in Matt. 26:39; Mk. 14:36; Lk. 22:42).

In our Lord's mind there was no doubt as to the Father's will. He had known it from the beginning and had come to do it. Nor is any doubt implied as to Christ's willingness. That had never been in doubt: "Lo I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God". His answer to Peter made this clear. His purpose in His prayer was to make evident the principles that were involved.

It was a declaration before the Universe, making clear His action, as was the declaration which God made when He separated from fallen man (Gen. 3:22. See p. 51).

The prayer has a deep significance and for that reason it is recorded with such care. First it is stated that all things are possible to God. Then Christ says, "If thou be willing, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me". It was necessary that it be made absolutely clear that, in the first place, the Cross was God's will, and that, in the second place, it was not possible to accomplish man's salvation in any other way. Not even almighty God, to whom all things are possible, could accomplish man's redemption without the Cross.

Had God not been willing—had it not been His will—it would have been wrong for Christ to die on the Cross. Had there been any other way possible it would have been wrong for the God of perfect love to ask such a sacrifice. But as it was God's will and there was no other way, Christ said, "not my will but thine be done"—and He went to the Cross. It was the only way in which perfect love could undo the ruin which man had brought upon himself. And Christ made the sacrifice voluntarily, of His own free will: "I lay down my life . . . no man taketh it from me, I lay it down of myself",

The Cost of Love's Fellowship of Service

But let us not think that in His soul Jesus did not have to meet the full cost of this sacrifice: that it was made easier for Him and the agony lightened. Rather did it cost Him more. For Him there was no merciful veiling of that which was before Him: He saw every step that He must take. And none could feel as He did, who was perfect love, the hatefulness of all that He was to suffer at the cruel hands of self-love.

In the making of this decision by the Son of Man, mind, heart and will are exercised. The mind faced the fact that it was God's will and that there was no other way. The emotions, stirred to their deepest depths, faced the suffering and shrank from it in an agony of anticipation. But perfect love in Jesus' heart—to the Father and to men—made the outcome certain. There was a way and no matter what the cost, love would take it. "Love endureth all things." And so He willed, intelligently, willingly, to do the Father's will. It was upon the heart that the issue depended. Any love of self would have demanded an opposite decision. Self-love would have said: "Am I my brother's keeper?"; perfect love was willing to make the utmost sacrifice to help his neighbour—even the rebel sinner who crucified Him.

In the Garden, we see the soul in Christ, but we see the Spirit also. It is the soul fully controlled by the Spirit of God: the soul actuated solely by the law of perfect love through the indwelling Spirit. By the Spirit came the pure light of perfect wisdom, the knowledge of the will of God and the power to do it.

We behold not only the Son of Man in Gethsemane but God the Father also. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." In Father and Son we witness an amazing example of the fellowship of perfect love. We see its nature, its objective and its cost.

As we have already seen, the communion of perfect love can not be a selfish thing, for self alone; its ultimate expression must be in the fellowship of love's work wrought in benefit to others.

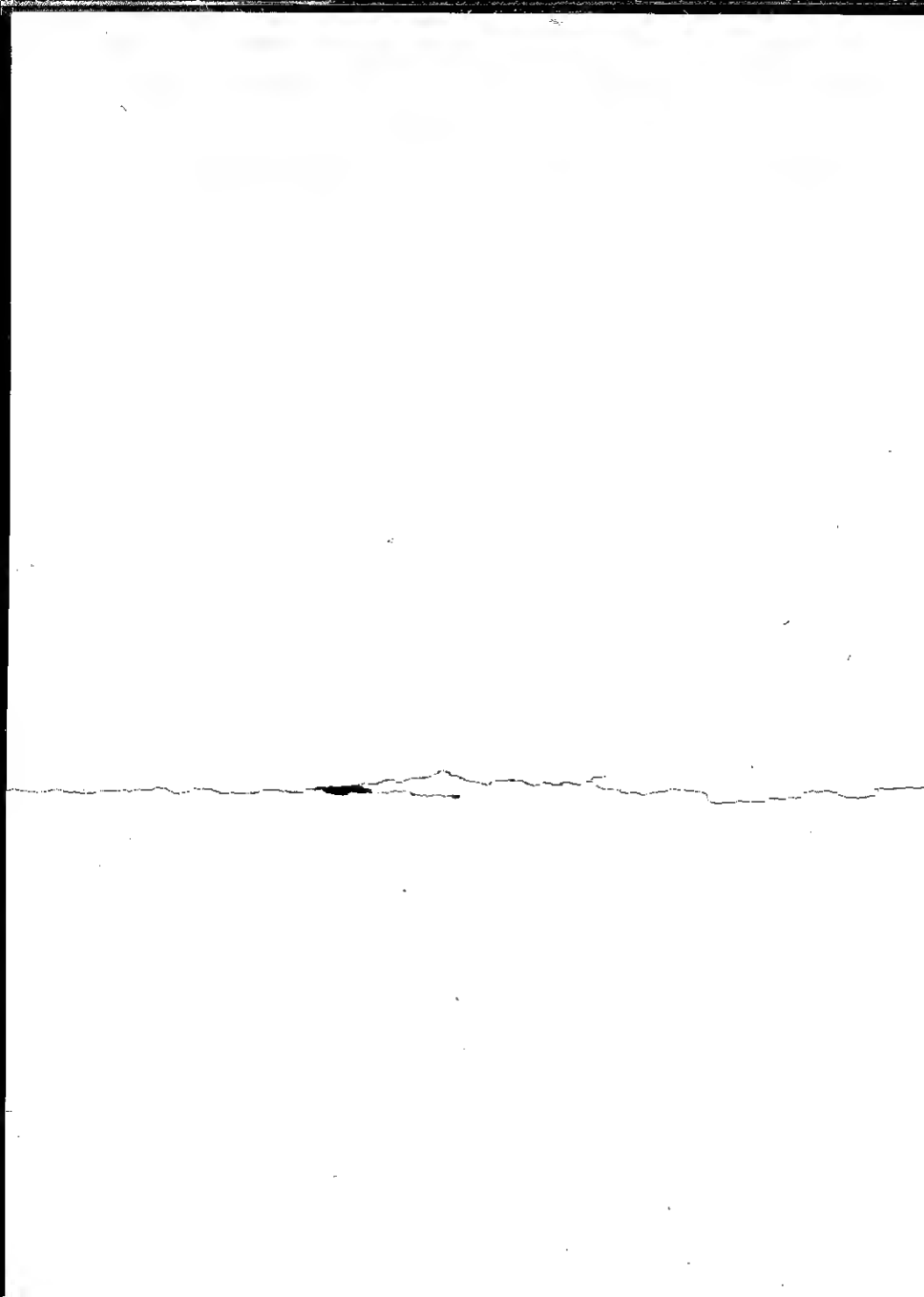
So we see this communion of perfect love between the Father and the Son expressing itself in the work of man's redemption. In neither can self enter in or be considered. Nothing of self can be withheld. The cost is the placing by both of all that is dearest upon the altar, without reservation, paying the ultimate price in their own hearts, in their own beings, for the redemption of sinful man.

Our Example

Christ is our example as well as our Saviour and we see the principles of the conflict which every believer in Him must face. We see the cost of the Cross which He said every follower of His must take: the cost of fellowship in His ministry and triumph.

We see how He faced it. We know that we also must, each one, face the question of absolute surrender alone. Into that no other can enter. It means going apart into that lonely place where there is only God and oneself. We know that it means our all, a complete surrender, an absolute sacrifice of soul and body with nothing held back. It means the voluntary, intelligent action of mind, heart and will surrendering to the Cross all that is of self. And we see the enabling for all this: the strengthening from God and the light of His Spirit who dwells within manifesting in us "the mind", the will and the love of Christ.

Our great Leader has trodden every step Himself that we might know the way, and He says to us, "Follow me". Now we know the way; we know the issue; we understand the conflict. And though we go alone, we are not alone for He stands by our side, and there with Him we find a fellowship of understanding that passes the dearest and highest dream of man's heart. For it is there in the fellowship of His sufferings, as we are made conformable unto His death, that we find the fulness of life. It is there that we enter into the supreme joy of soul and Spirit, of God and man: the fellowship of perfect love not only in personal communion but in the sacrificial ministry of love that brings life to those in death.



PART IV

LIFE IN CHRIST

"Christ Who is our life".—Col. 3:4.

HEBREWS 4:12

THE WORD OF GOD

sharper than any
TWO-EDGED SWORD
Dividing Between-

SOUL

SELF-LOVE

THE FRUIT
OF THE TREE OF
THE KNOWLEDGE
OF GOOD AND EVIL

Self-glory
Self-interest
 given first place
Self-assertion
Walking after
 the flesh
Soulish worship
Soulish service
Soulish prayer
Soulish giving
Soulish singing
Soulish conversation
Soulish wisdom
Soulish power
Soulish pride
Self-pity
Love of self
Selfishness
Uncrucified heart
Uncrucified mind
Uncrucified will
Uncrucified body



SPIRIT

PERFECT LOVE

THE FRUIT,
OF THE
TREE OF LIFE

True humility
Seeking the other's
 good
Self-sacrifice
Walking in the
 Spirit
Worship in the Spirit
Serving in the Spirit
Praying in the Spirit
Giving in the Spirit
Singing in the Spirit
Spiritual conversation
Spiritual wisdom
Spiritual power
Lowliness of mind
Self-abnegation
Perfect love to God
Loving neighbour
Crucified heart
Crucified mind
Crucified will
Crucified body

IT SPARES NOTHING

"and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

DESIGNED BY: ALEX. R. HAY

DRAWN BY: H. R. PRICHARD

CHAPTER XV

WHAT IS THE VICTORIOUS LIFE?

We once heard it said, "To speak of the victorious life is to use superlative language to describe a comparative experience." The one who gave expression of this criticism was thinking of the power of the flesh within, a power which every believer in the Lord, if he is honest with himself and before God, must sorrowfully acknowledge. He also had in mind, unfortunately, an evident lack of victorious experience in some who speak much of the victorious life.

We refer to this criticism for the sake of the truth it contains. When this truth is set in its right place in the teaching of God's Word it will be helpful in making clear both what the victorious life in Christ is and what it is not.

In the first place, it must be remembered that the theory of the victorious life is one thing, the practice quite another. The Word says that, "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. 3:6). Can the teaching about the victorious life bring death? Yes, the knowledge of it without the practice can produce self-satisfaction, pride and hypocrisy. It is always so with spiritual truth. Spiritual truth is life, not theory. Knowledge of the facts about it is necessary but the thing itself is life, not knowledge. If we do not have the life of which it teaches we have nothing.

For instance, one man teaches about the victorious life, but when someone who is serving him does not do things to please him he loses his temper and bawls him out. Another man is an authority on the victorious life, but when a dog comes near him he kicks it—because he 'can't stand dogs'. Another prides himself on his deep knowledge of the victorious life but he is always criticising his brethren. Another writes about the victorious life but in his letters he can be sharp and unkind. Another witnesses to all about it, but he is difficult to get on with because everything must be done just as he likes it. Another is jealous of his own interests and woe betide any one he thinks is trespassing on his ground. Another is full of self-confidence and thinks he knows all the answers. Another cannot co-operate because his interests must come first and he must be the centre. Another is irritable and impatient; another slothful and careless. The children of another are undisciplined. Another fails to give her husband his place as head of the home; another gossips.

Now what are all these 'buts' that rob us so effectively of the

victorious life which we know and of which we speak? Are they not all just self—the very thing that we say must be crucified? But it is not crucified.

Does any one live a life of perfect victory? No, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Has any one ever lived a life of perfect victory? Yes, the Lord did, and only He.

Is there such a thing for us then as the victorious life? Yes, there certainly is. It is the Lord's life and "He liveth in me", and the experience of that victorious life is ours exactly to the extent that He lives in us. And He lives in us exactly to the extent that we permit self to be on the Cross.

We have seen that the victorious life was not theory to Christ; He paid the price moment by moment and lived it. His perfect love for the Father and for man, His humility and self-abnegation, His prayer life and faith and utter dependence upon God, His silence before His accusers, His patience and unailing love toward His disciples, His perfect obedience to the Father and yielding of Himself to death, even for those who hated and reviled Him, were not theory; they were His life. Through them He was the Living Word. Without them He would have been nothing.

His life in us will be that same life. It will not be theory. It will be no easier; it will cost no less. Without it we are and have nothing.

When we see weakness and failure in those who speak of the victorious life, shall we lose patience with them and condemn them utterly? Our Lord does not, and if He lives in us we shall not. The victorious life will be manifested in the Lord's grace shown through us towards them. It is our privilege to minister to them through prayer and faith and the loving patience of the Lord. They may be grieving over their own failures, or they may be blind to them. And they may see weakness and failure in us that we are just as blind to.

Shall we excuse them then? Is that weakness and failure inevitable and justifiable? God's Word makes it very clear that they are neither inevitable nor justifiable but utterly sinful and inexcusable. There is no excuse for the sharp tongue or dishonesty or self-seeking or lack of forgiveness or whatever it is that we consider our weakness. They are what rob us of our joy and power. They rob the Lord of that which is His in His purchased possession. They hinder others of the Lord's people from knowing of the victory He would give. They prevent souls from finding life in Christ. They break the unity of the Spirit in the

CHRIST OUR VICTORY

My Lord
and my God.

Jn. 20:28

Dead with Him. - Rom. 6:8

Risen with Him. - Eph. 2:6

Seated with Him. - Eph. 2:6

Christ our Righteousness. 1 Cor. 1:30

Christ our Wisdom. 1 Cor. 1:30

Whole Love Given to Him. Jn. 14:21

Obedying Him. - Jn. 14:15

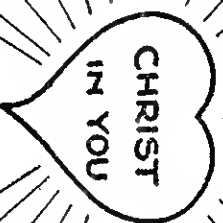
Abiding in Him. - Jn. 15:4

Living for Him Alone. Rom. 14:8

Doing All in His Name. Col. 3:17

Serving Him Alone. Jn. 15:16; Matt. 28:20

Crucified with Him. - Gal. 2:20



For Me to Live

Is Christ.

Phil. 1:21

Rejected with Him. Heb. 13:13

Bearing His Cross. Matt. 16:24

His Cross our Only Glory. Gal. 6:14

Indwelt by Him. - Col. 1:27

Dwelling in Him. Jn. 17:21-23

Suffering with Him. Col. 1:24

Members of His Body. Eph. 5:30

Complete in Him. Col. 2:9, 10

Growing up in Him. Eph. 4:15

Manifesting His Love. Eph. 3:17, 20

Filled with His Fullness. Eph. 1:23; 4:15

Manifesting His Image. Rom. 8:29

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H. R. Pritchard

Body of Christ and hinder the carrying out of its corporate ministry.

His Power to Us-ward

Paul was not perfect, yet he had a profound belief in the power of the Spirit to manifest Christ's victory in him. He might be accused of frequently using superlative language to describe comparative experience. He said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). Yet he laid no claim to perfect accomplishment. Again, he declared, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). Yet he also speaks of himself as "the chief of sinners" and says, "in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing". He was thankful to God for the "thorn in the flesh" which the Lord saw was needful to him for discipline lest he "should be exalted above measure", and that his weakness might continue in surrender to permit God's triumphant strength to be displayed in him.

Paul's glorious testimony regarding the ministry in which he and his companions were engaged was, "Now thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place". Yet this triumphing had not been by rose-strewn paths, but through continual conflict, with hardness and suffering.

Paul wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The superlative language which he used with reference to victory in Christ in life and service was chosen by the Holy Spirit. It was not over-statement due to religious enthusiasm. We must accept it as spiritual reality; as God's revelation to us of the present heritage which every believer possesses in Christ.

His superlatives referred to Christ whose power is superlative. Conybeare's translation of 2 Cor. 2:14 reads: "But thanks be to God who leads me on from place to place in the train of his triumph, to celebrate his victory over the enemies of Christ; and by me sends forth the knowledge of Him, a stream of fragrant incense, throughout the world". The continual personal triumph of the servant of Christ was the outcome of being led on from place to place in the train of Christ's triumph. That is, it was Christ's triumph, not the servant's triumph that was being manifested. Christ had triumphed over all Satan's power. After His triumph, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, "Far above all principality and power, and might, and domin-

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S PART IN THE VICTORIOUS LIFE

The Spirit of Life

Rom. 8:2-16; 1 Cor. 3:16

Author of the New Birth. Jn. 3:5-8

The "Paraclete"
in Christ's Place. Jn. 14:16-26

Baptizes into the One Body
of Christ, the Church. 1 Cor. 12:13

Manifests Resurrection
Life of Christ. Eph. 1:19, 20; Rom. 8:11

Enables to Mortify
Deeds of the Body. Rom. 8:13; Eph. 3:16

Enables for true Worship.
Jn. 4:23-24

THE HOLY SPIRIT

He is the Anointing for Knowledge
1 Jn. 2:20, 27; Jn. 14:26; 1 Cor. 2:10-15

Manifests fruits in
the Daily Life. - Gal. 5:22-23

Manifests Grace-gifts for
Service. Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12; 1 Cor. 2:4

Guides in Prayer According
to God's Will. Rom. 8:26, 27; Eph. 6:18

Manifests the Fullness
of Christ. Eph. 3:16-20; 2 Cor. 3:18

May be Grieved or Quenched.
Eph. 4:30; 1 Thes. 5:19

Walk
in the Spirit.
Gal. 5:16, 25; Eph. 4:30

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ion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church" (Eph. 1:21, 22). His is the place of absolute authority and power. In that position He is the Head of the Church, His Body. In Him, the Church and every member of it participate in His triumph. "He . . . called us to share the life of Christ . . . and in Christ Jesus, He raised us up with Him from the dead, and seated us with Him in the heavens" (Eph. 2:5, 6, Conybeare).

Paul was a servant of the Lord called to a work and witness which his Lord wished to accomplish through him by the Spirit. He was a yielded instrument, therefore the Lord used him, working through him by the Spirit, leading him from place to place, speaking through him, manifesting in and through him His absolute triumph and authority over every power of Satan and man, and by him making known His message of life to dying men and establishing His Church throughout the world.

The Principles of the Victorious Life

Paul in himself was not strong; he was weak. In himself he was not better than other men. He felt the urgent need of being continually watchful lest he should lose his usefulness and be set aside.

In his letter to the Romans Paul explains the principles and the objective of the overcoming life. In the sixth chapter he tells us that sin must not have dominion over us. "For we know", he says, "that our old man was crucified with Christ that the sinful body (of the old man) might be destroyed, that we might no longer be the slaves of sin". Therefore we must by faith take this position and "reckon" ourselves "to be dead indeed unto sin but living unto God in Christ Jesus". "Let not sin therefore reign in your dying body, causing you to obey its lusts; nor give up your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness, but give yourselves to God, as being restored to life from the dead, and your members to His service as instruments of righteousness; for sin shall not have the mastery over you" (Rom. 6:15-13, Conybeare).

That is the position so far as sin is concerned and the believer's responsibility to live righteously. But knowing that is not sufficient, for the believer finds that it is not possible for him in his own strength to do so. In the seventh chapter Paul faces this. He says, "For me, I am carnal . . . I know that in me, that is, in

TOWARDS FULFILMENT

GOD - Perfect Love

Satan -
Self-love

Man Made
in Image of God
of Perfect Love

Man Unfaithful
Fell in Satan's sin
of Self-love

In His love and mercy He carried them - Heb. 1:1
Isa. 63:9

The Church, 'His Body' manifesting Christ - Eph. 3:17-20

"In love... building itself up in love." - Eph. 4:15, 16.

Fallen Man under the prince and god of the Cosmos

The Purpose Fulfilled.
The Redeemed
Presented Perfect
in Love - Eph. 1:4

Designed by: Alex. R. Hay

Drawn by: H. R. Prichard

my flesh, good abides not; for to will is present with me, but to do the right is absent; the good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do. Now if my own will is against my deeds, it is no more I myself who do them but the sin that dwells in me. I find then this law, that though my will is to do good, yet evil is present with me; for I consent gladly to the law of God in my inner man, but I behold another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and making me captive to the law of sin which is in my members" (Conyheare).

So the believer's will not to sin and his effort to "reckon" himself dead to sin come up against the hard fact that the law of sin is within him and that he is unable to free himself from its dominion. The Spirit within him gives him the desire to do right and a hatred of sin, but he finds himself bound to that which he hates.

Then Paul gives expression to the cry of the believer who finds himself in this situation, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom. 7:24, Conybeare). He has come to realize that he is by nature carnal, that no good, only evil, dwells in him, and that he is unable to deliver himself. He is then forced to look beyond himself and his own strength, realizing His own utter insufficiency to cleanse himself from his evil nature.

If his cry is sincere, the answer is there, "I thank God (that He has now delivered me) through Jesus Christ our Lord". Through Christ, and through Him alone, is deliverance from the power of sin within us—and He has already delivered us: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has freed me from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2).

Then Paul continues in the eighth chapter dealing with the believer's walk in the power of the Spirit who dwells in him. He has shown us the two laws that are in us—the law of sin and death which is in us by nature, and the law of the Spirit, who is the Spirit of life, who is in us through the rebirth which made us partakers of the "Divine nature". Life for the heliever is not in the natural man (the flesh) but in the Spirit who dwells in every true child of God. Our walk, therefore, must be in the Spirit, not in the flesh. The fleshly mind seeks that which is fleshly, it cannot please God, it is at enmity with God and it inevitably brings death.

When Christ is in us, though the body has the law of death in it, yet the Spirit is to us life (life abundant), because "He who

raised Christ from the dead shall endow with life also your dying bodies by His Spirit who dwells within you" (Rom. 8:11, Conybeare).

Paul then mentions other factors that bear upon the situation. He has spoken of laws within us, now he deals with outward circumstances—the hope of the world in which we live, the destiny to which God has predestinated us and His present work in us in view of that destiny.

The Objective

We live in a world in which not only man but all nature suffers from the effect of sin and is waiting anxiously for the glory of the sons of God that shall be revealed. "For the creation was made subject to decay, not by its own will but because of Him who subjected it thereto, in hope: for the creation itself also shall be delivered from its slavery to death, and shall gain the freedom of the sons of God when they are glorified. For we know that the whole creation is groaning together, and suffering the pangs of labour, which have not yet brought forth the birth. And not only they, but ourselves also, who have received the Spirit for the firstfruits (of our inheritance), even we ourselves are groaning inwardly, longing for the adoption which shall ransom our body from its bondage" (Rom. 8:20-23, Conybeare).

We have already seen what this adoption is. It is that to which the believer is predestinated in God's purpose, the destiny which God has determined for us, the fulfilment of which nothing can prevent (Eph. 1:5). When we receive our glorified bodies and are presented perfect in love in His presence, we are to enter into our full privileges as adult sons in a full co-operation with God in His work. As this world came under sin's blight through the fall of its head, man, so it waits also for the full restoration of redeemed man, which will bring deliverance to it.

Meanwhile, while we are still in the flesh, God's purpose for us is that Christ should be manifested in us by the Spirit. This He is seeking to do every moment of our lives through every circumstance that may face us. As Christ manifested the Father on earth so we are to manifest Christ. But as this manifestation on Christ's part was attended by conflict and suffering, so also it will be with us. It will be a warfare against the flesh, the world and Satan. However, "We know", states Paul, "that all things work together for good to those who love God, who have been called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be made like to the pattern of His Son,

THE TWO NATURES

SPIRITUAL

In Him is the
LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE
which has freed Him from
the Law of sin and Death

A Priest of Royal Lineage
to offer Spiritual Sacrifices

Ruling Principle

Perfect love to God and neighbour

Walking in the
Spirit by Faith

HEART
Yielded in love to Christ

WILL
Yielded to God's will

MIND
The Mind of Christ

Body
Yielded a sacrifice



Ruling Principle

Self-Love
self-interest

Would walk after
the Flesh

HEART
Seeking self-glory

WILL
Opposed to God's will

MIND
Wisdom darkened

Body
Desiring self-satisfaction

In Him is the
LAW OF SIN AND DEATH

CARNAL

that many brethren might be joined to Him, the firstborn" (Rom. 8:28, 29, Conybeare).

We live in a world blighted by sin and in a body blighted by sin, but no matter what we may encounter in this life, we who are Christ's have this definite knowledge—God will use it all in love as an instrument in the carrying out of the glorious purpose to which He has destined us. If that purpose is to be wrought by delivering us from a trial He will do so. But if it is to be accomplished through the trial, He, in His perfect love, will not free us from the trial but strengthen us to go through it and to be victorious over it.

No matter what the difficulty may be or how great, whether from man or from Satan, it will be an instrument in the loving, sure hand of the Master workman for the fashioning of the image of Christ within us. No matter what man or Satan may do, they cannot rob us of our glorious destiny. Not even the destruction of the body can do so.

So Paul burst into the triumphant superlatives of the believer's security: "If God be for us who can be against us? . . . Who can separate us from the love of Christ? Can suffering or straitness of distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or the peril of our lives, or the swords of our enemies? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor all the Principalities and Powers of Angels, nor things present, nor things to come, nor things above, nor things below, nor any power in the whole creation, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:31, 35-39, Conybeare).

The Two Laws

Let us return to the two laws that are within the believer: the law of sin and death and the law of the Spirit of life—the law of self-love and the law of perfect love. The one law is natural to the flesh; the other is the Spirit of Christ who is within us. There is, therefore, a conflict within the soul of the man who is born of the Spirit. His natural heart is selfish, proud, ambitious of self-glory, confident of its own wisdom, doubting God's wisdom, incredulous of the Spirit's power, desiring God's aid only for the realization of its own purposes, and desperately unwilling to acknowledge Him as Lord and to yield Him full obedience. But also, within the heart, is the Spirit of the Lord. And the Spirit's law is the master law which has freed us from the law of sin. We

THE TWO LAWS

The believer decides which will rule.

The Law of Sin and Death at work in our members by nature.

The Law of the Spirit of Life has delivered us from the Law of Sin and Death.

In enmity against God's will. Reasoning for self's way.



God's law in the mind renewed to know His will.

Loving self and the ways of self.



God's law in the heart loving Him and His will.

THE
WILL

Free and sovereign to accept - or reject
God's will and the Spirit's
power for victory.

DECISION

ACTION

According to whichever law the will accepts.

are liberated; it is not something in the future or to be acquired little by little.

How evident is the conflict between the two laws of life and of sin in the believer's heart! He may say that he desires to have freedom from sin, to do God's will, to experience the victorious power of the Spirit within—but his desire for these things may not be strong enough to cause him to take the necessary steps to gain them. He may even pray for victory and for the carrying out of God's will in his life and yet definitely avoid full surrender because he is not willing for the consequences. God's law is loved; but something else is loved more.

The Spirit of Life dwells within this "earthen vessel". "The fulness (pleroma) of Him that filleth all in all" is in us. "And of this fulness have we all (who are born of the Spirit) received". It is nothing less than the fulness of Christ who sits at the right hand of the majesty on high. It is the fulness of the power of Him under whose feet all things have been placed. He is within us and He is victorious.

By Deliberate Choice

But the issue depends upon us. Paul shows that it is a matter of voluntary, deliberate, personal yieldedness and faith: "Reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:11). He exhorts: "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1). This Paul himself did. In it is self-discipline dependent upon faith in the power of God's Spirit, who "worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13).

We have found that our will and our desire are not sufficient to give us the victory. But we have seen that there is a power beyond our power within us—the Holy Spirit who has already freed us. So now we understand that our will and our desire do not accomplish the victory by their own power but they open the way for the Holy Spirit to make effective His victory in us.

This reckoning of himself dead on Paul's part—the definite and voluntary placing of himself, and all that was of the flesh in him, on the Cross by faith, and the confident counting upon God's faithfulness to fulfil His Word and manifest His life in him—is also evident in his declaration to the Philippians: "But what once was gain to me, that I have counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, because all are nothing-worth in comparison with the knowledge of Christ Jesus

my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but as dung that I may gain Christ, and be found in Him; that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, sharing the likeness of His death" (Phil. 3:7, 8, 10, Conybeare). That which he had loved before, he loved no more, for now he had a greater love.

Paul's urging to this deliberate choice and voluntary yielding is again heard in Rom. 6:13: "But give yourselves to God, as being restored to life from the dead, and your members to His service as instruments of righteousness" (Conybeare).

The outcome of true yielding and faith is the opening of the door for the fulfilment of God's Word to the believer. As by faith the flesh with its self-love is reckoned dead, the Holy Spirit is permitted actually to bring it into death. As by true faith Christ's life and power are reckoned upon, it is made possible for the Holy Spirit to manifest them in the believer.

It was thus that Paul walked in the Spirit by faith experiencing the fulfilment of God's Word in his life and in the ministry to which he was called. All are not called to the same ministry, but no matter what be the ministry to which a believer is called, the same yielding and faith will bring the same result: the fulfilment of God's Word and the experience of Christ's triumph in both life and service.

Victorious Warfare

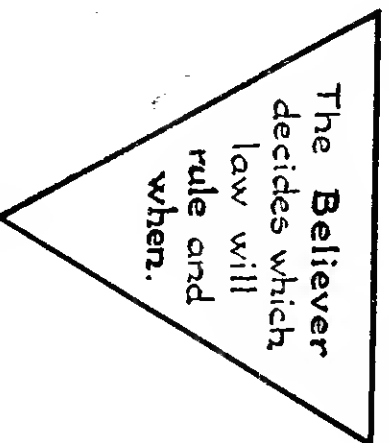
This triumphing in Christ did not mean a freedom from temptation and testing and trial. It did not mean the cessation of Satan's attacks and efforts to discourage, to ensnare and to bring into defeat. The warfare did not cease in Paul's life; but he triumphed in the warfare. He testified: "I am hard pressed, yet not crushed; perplexed, yet not despairing; persecuted, yet not forsaken; struck down, yet not destroyed. In my body I bear about continually the dying of Jesus, that in my body the life also of Jesus might be shown forth. For I, in the midst of life, am daily given over to death for the sake of Jesus, that in my dying flesh the life whereby Jesus conquered death might show forth its power. So then death working in me, works life in you" (2 Cor. 4:8-12, Conybeare).

Oftentimes Paul found himself in circumstances in which there was nothing apparent but defeat. Scourged and cast into prison; what victory was there? Stoned out of the city and left for dead; what success was there to rejoice his soul? Finally left a prisoner

THE VICTORY IS GIVEN - BUT THE WILL IS SOVEREIGN.

Law of Sin in
man's nature

Law of Life of
indwelling Spirit



The Will
Decision-Action

The law of the Spirit is supreme. The believer is liberated. But he must be willing. By the strength of his will he cannot manifest the law of life. It is the Spirit's life, spiritual. But, as the believer is truly willing, the Spirit manifests it. The will opens the way or closes it to the Spirit's power.

in Rome—where was the triumphal end to the walk of faith and the life of utter consecration? But it was only under such circumstances that faith could be fully displayed. Faith in these conditions is real—not theoretical or sentimental or dependent upon favourable circumstances. It was faith at the battle front, faith that brought to naught Satan's most cunningly devised attacks, robbing his most overwhelming successes of their victory, turning them into utter defeat, and making possible the displaying of God's power and faithfulness over the utmost that Satan could do.

Paul had faced Satan's power continually. He had ever been in the center of the conflict, pressing forward into Satan's territory, storming his most strongly entrenched positions. It had been real warfare in which all the power and subtlety and hate and venom of a foe that is mightier than man had been hurled against the servant of the Lord to disarm, entrap, discourage, destroy him and by any means prevent Christ from manifesting His triumph and accomplishing His purpose through him. And it was while still in the midst of that conflict that he gave his great testimony to his Lord's faithfulness in causing him always to triumph and fulfilling His purpose through him in every place.

Triumphing in Christ is not a passive state. The victorious life is not the peace of stagnation. It is unceasing warfare. It is Christ's continual victory over our continual weakness; the manifestation of Christ's love and the bringing into death of our self-love. It is not the exercise of the will forcing ourselves to observe certain forms or denying ourselves certain things. That is "will worship"; behind it self-love flourishes. It is not perfection—Christ only is perfect. It is not sinlessness: if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves. It is not the eradication of the heart's self-love and all its fruit; it is not freedom from the flesh, but a continual, moment by moment, deliberate reckoning of the flesh dead by faith whenever and wherever it appears and the rendering of willing obedience. It is the immediate confessing of failure and sin and stepping back into the place of surrender. It is self-discipline based upon love and faith. It is the acknowledging of weakness that His strength may be revealed. It is participating, as an instrument, in the carrying out of Christ's purposes. It is trusting Him implicitly and obeying Him without question. It is permitting Him to dwell in us in His fulness and to carry out His perfect will through us. A victorious army is not one that has never lost a skirmish; it is one that has yielded no ground and triumphed in the decisive battle.

The Joy of Perfect Fulfilment

The victorious walk with Christ means the fulfilling of the basic commandment to love God with all the heart, mind and strength and our neighbour as oneself. That is the victorious life that our Lord lived. For us to do this, Christ must live in us, for to Him alone is it possible.

We have seen that the sharing of His life means the sharing of the conflict which it brought Him in this Satan-ruled world. But let us not think that His is a joyless life, one that consists of the patient endurance of afflictions and restrictions. We have also seen that, as God made him, the fundamental necessity of man's being is love and that perfect joy is to be found in oneness with God in communion and in fellowship of service. In our sharing of Christ's overcoming life we enter into something at least of these experiences. It is the place of the most perfect satisfaction and usefulness in life. We find a joy and a peace that in their reality and purity give the deepest satisfaction and our life's work takes a meaning that gives it its perfect fulfilment. Whatever afflictions may be met in the way then are swallowed up in victory, as was manifested by the Lord, "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

CHAPTER XVI

THE OFFENCE OF THE CROSS

Under certain circumstances Christ is "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence" (1 Pet. 2:8). He was an offence to the religious Pharisee. His Cross is "a stumbling-block" to the Jew, with his religious works, and foolishness to the Greek, with his human wisdom. It was an offence to Cain, who offered a sacrifice that made no acknowledgment of sin.

But it was an offence to Peter also, who loved his Lord (albeit with a limited love) and had given up so much of material things to follow Him. This we have already seen.

The Believer an Offence

Not only is this so, but the believer who has denied self and in whom the Cross of Christ is manifested finds that he becomes an offence in the same sense that his Lord was.

This he cannot escape; nor can he escape the consequences of it. "All that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). He who takes up the Cross faces inevitable persecution. But let us understand that it will be persecution of a peculiar kind. Peter, as we have seen, had left all and thought he was ready to suffer any persecution, even to face death. The persecution came, but it was of a kind he was not prepared for and he failed. We may say readily and sincerely, "I am willing to face anything for my Lord", but we shall certainly find, like Peter, that we are not ready—not in our own strength. The persecution will be of a kind that we will be able to meet only in His strength. After Pentecost, Peter was ready: he was ready in his Lord's strength. He had yielded his love fully to the Lord and the Spirit of the Lord was dwelling in him.

The persecution that comes to one who really is willing to leave all that is of self and to take up the Cross in the full meaning of that word, is of a kind that requires something far greater than all the heroism that the soul powers are capable of. How many a young Christian has been disappointed and puzzled as he has started out bravely, ready, as he thought, even eager, for an occasion to show his faithfulness in a bout with the enemy. But as the days passed it seemed that no opportunity came to display his strength, at least not in the way he expected. And then when the test did come it was of a kind he was not

prepared for and did not understand, and he failed. The test that came to Peter required a Peter that was crucified with Christ but Peter had not yet died to Peter, and so he failed. The persecution that comes when one takes up his Cross to follow Christ in true, full surrender and denial of all that is of the self-life, is of a kind that gives no place for heroics. It originates with Satan and is spiritual in its nature. Satan's purpose is to rouse our self-love and God permits the test for one purpose only—to work in us more of that true death to self so that more of His true life may fill us. It is a persecution that will never bring any glory to self, will never be pleasant to the flesh and will always mean the Cross with all its shame.

It is a persecution that may be avoided. He who does not take his Cross and follow all the way with his Lord will escape it. The testimony of the Cross will not be in his life. For that reason, the offence of the Cross will not be there, so no persecution will be aroused. What draws persecution is the testimony to God's judgment of all that is of the fallen soul—of man's soulish wisdom and goodness and works and power—as "filthy rags" that must be cast away as vile, all part of the sin-ruined soul that must go to the Cross, down into death.

That complete acknowledgment of worthlessness and unworthiness, that complete surrender to God, the self-loving soul of man is not willing to make. It is willing to be religious; it is willing to do good works; it is willing even to suffer heroically, so long as it may take the credit for it, but it does not want to die: to recognize truly its own selfishness and unworthiness and submit wholly to God. It wants to continue living, to glory in itself, to occupy the seat of authority and control—the Throne.

Whatever would challenge man's claim to the Throne and testify against it arouses hate and brings persecution. And that hate is manifested not only by those who are of the world but sometimes by those who name the Name of the Lord. Whether the person is an unbeliever or a believer makes no difference: if the soul is on the Throne the result will be the same. The hate and persecution will come as readily from the professing believer as from the unbeliever. To both, the testimony of the Spirit is regarding the absolute claims of the Cross, and in both the flesh cries, NO! It was the religious man whose hate crucified Christ, and the organized Church has its hands steeped in the blood of the martyrs. When the believer is offered greater light and rejects it because of what its acceptance will cost, there enters into his heart a hatred of those whose lives witness to that light.

The Heart of True Doctrine

Let us remember that **no** doctrine is complete and wholly true unless viewed against the background of the Cross. Doctrine is nothing unless it is life and it can be life only through the Cross. The reaction of the soul to doctrine differs according to the manner in which doctrine is presented. Much may be taught about faith, prayer, love, service, and even Christ-likeness that is very acceptable to the soul. It gives no offence, rouses no persecution. It may even create applause. It is doctrine into which the Cross does not enter. The soul is allowed to live, to be religious, to be good, to pray, to have faith, to imitate Christ, to do great things for God. It permits the soul to offer to God Cain's worship.

But let these doctrines be preached with the Cross as their starting point and the only ground upon which their truth can be known and experienced, and the situation immediately changes. When it is shown that true prayer must be Holy Spirit-guided and according to God's will, and that God's will can be known only by the one who, moment by moment, "reckons himself dead" and walks in the way of the Cross with his Lord in full surrender, then the flesh is offended. It means death to the flesh, the exclusion of human wisdom and strength, and the flesh rises in indignation and wrath. And so it is when the witness is given that all service to God must be in the Spirit, the work of the indwelling Spirit of the Lord, and that the Spirit can fill us and bear His fruit through us only as that which is of the flesh is on the Cross.

Such a witness is not popular. Because it means death to all the self-love of the flesh, the flesh will resent it, will call it extreme and fanatical, will oppose it, if necessary, with the bitterest hate.

It is the deadly conflict between the two laws, between the two Thrones. It was the Cross in Christ's witness that brought to Him the Cross. The Cross in Paul's witness brought to him the Cross. The Cross in the believer's witness will always bring to him the Cross. The Cross means death—but only to self. The Cross of Christ brought life—life that will flow to eternity, life that springs anew in every soul that turns to Him in faith. The Cross in the believer also brings life—life within and life flowing out to others. As Paul says, "For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you" (2 Cor. 4:11, 12).

CHAPTER XVII

FAITH AND HOPE

The great, eternal, motivating principles in life—in God and in man—are faith, hope and love—that is: that which we believe, that which we confidently look forward to, and that which our heart loves. The greatest of these is love. The other two are dependent upon it: indeed, they are born of love. The confidence of love is necessary to absolute faith and absolute faith is essential to the certainty of hope.

In our Lord, we see these three principles. From His perfect love to the Father was derived His absolute faith and from that came His certainty of hope. Through love and faith He knew that the Cross would bring salvation to men and in the joy of that hope that was set before Him He went forward to pay the cost. In His dealings with His disciples, we see the same principles. By love's faith He saw them as they would be when filled with the Spirit. In His love for Peter, He prayed for him, seeing through faith the victory that would make him a strength to the brethren.

We are told that "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen". Faith gave reality to our Lord's vision of love. He saw man's redemption as already gained and experienced the joy of it even as He faced the Cross.

Faith is essential to our whole Christian experience. By faith, we enter into all that Christ has obtained for us. Without faith, we cannot please God or experience His love or the power of His Spirit within us. Our Lord said, "According to your faith be it unto you".

What is faith? Paul chooses Abraham as the typical example. He says of him, "Under utterly hopeless circumstances he hopefully believed . . . being absolutely certain that whatever promise He (God) is bound by He is also able to perform" (Rom. 4:18, 21, Weymouth). The facts of the case were simply these:

- (1) God gave a promise to Abraham.
- (2) Abraham believed it and acted upon it.

But God tested Abraham's faith. The years passed and it became humanly impossible for Abraham and Sara to have a son. Now what about God's promise? Human experience and the laws of nature said that it could not be fulfilled. But Abraham held that the power of God's promise was superior to the power

of nature or to man's experience, so under "utterly hopeless circumstances" he was absolutely certain.

Faith's Confidence

From Abraham's attitude we see what faith is: it is complete confidence in God's Word. It is nothing more than that. Yes, it is as simple as that. A man who has faith does just what Abraham did: he does not "stagger in unbelief" at what God has promised, but believes it and counts absolutely upon its fulfilment. That is all that Abraham did. It is all that George Muller did.

Faith is not a power that a man may possess, by which he can move the arm of God and work miracles. Faith is not a sort of Aladdin's lamp, a power by which, if we use it the right way, can move the arm of God. A man of faith does not possess supernatural power nor can he make God do things. Man would like to; his soulish heart would glory in it. But there is nothing in true faith that the flesh can glory in. The power is God's. It is God who works and He does it according to His own wisdom and will. Faith is simply absolute confidence in God which gives the certainty that He will fulfil His Word.

Not only so, but faith is a grace-gift or manifestation of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:7, 9). The natural mind alone cannot exercise true faith. The revelation, knowledge and confidence given by the Spirit are necessary; although also there must be the full, voluntary and intelligent co-operation with the Spirit on the part of the believer. The Holy Spirit will give faith for all that is God's will, for all to which He calls us.

The first essential in the exercise of faith is to know God's will. We cannot have confidence in what God has said until we know what He has said. To make our plans according to our wisdom and will and then say that we shall exercise faith that God will bring them to pass is not faith, it is presumption. True faith will always have a true basis in God's Word.

Essential also to faith is obedience. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. 11:8). How often we enter not into the promise because of disobedience! Abraham remained in Haran until the death of his father, thus delaying the carrying out of God's purpose.

Having received God's call, obedience must govern every step. Every detail must be according to His will. When He leads

forward we must have faith to obey. When He gives us no leading to go forward we must have faith to obey and wait patiently. Here is where our faith is often greatly tried. We are tempted to take hold of the reins, thinking it is necessary to do something to bring God's will to pass. Ishmael was the fruit of such an effort on Abraham's part and that fleshly work remains to harass God's chosen people to this day. Obedience must be implicit and the hand of flesh must be kept entirely off the Spirit's work.

The soulish mind does not see how God's work is going to be done without human organization and effort. To let it be done by the Holy Spirit in a purely spiritual way seems impractical, impossible, foolish and unreasonable. Only faith knows it is possible. By faith the natural is put in its proper place and we take hold of the reality and power of the spiritual. What we cannot see with the natural eye or understand with the natural understanding, we know by faith to be true, and we take our place in Christ in the heavenlies, living, working and fighting in the Spirit in the spiritual realm in the power of Him who upholds all things by the word of His power.

What God Seeks

What God seeks is men and women to whom He can reveal His will and who believe that He can accomplish it through them. He used Gideon as an instrument for the manifestation of His power in the deliverance of His people from the oppression into which they had fallen as a result of unbelief and disobedience. Gideon's power was faith; he believed that God could do again what He had done before. He said, "... why then has all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? ..." Then the Lord said to him, "Go in this thy might and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?" (Jud. 6:13, 14). God had found a man who did not doubt that He, God, could deliver them, so He used him.

When God called Moses and revealed to him what He willed to do through him, the difficulty in Moses' mind was not doubt of God's power but of the possibility of it being done through him: "Who am I that I should go..." So it was with Gideon also: "Ob, my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold my family is poor in Manasseh and I am the least in my father's house". But the Lord's answer was: "Surely I will be with thee".

Recognition of personal unfitness is, of course, essential in an

instrument that God is to use. But that being truly recognized, we must go forward in unshakable faith that God's power is sufficiently great to use whatever instrument He chooses.

The Certainty of Hope

The meaning of hope as used in the Word is not the "I hope so" of men. It is the purpose of God set before us which we know with absolute certainty shall be. It is not subject to the element of uncertainty which always exists in man's hopes. Therefore it gives us a basis to build upon that is so solid that we can proceed as if we already possessed it.

In faith there must be no doubt. If we say we have faith but entertain doubts, in reality we do not have faith. Doubts are the outcome of lack of absolute confidence in God and that means that our love for God is weak, for if it were strong we would have perfect confidence in Him. Doubts make it impossible for us to have the certainty of hope. We cannot enter into the vision of God's completed work. When we know God's will, true faith gives us that hope: we see God's will fully accomplished, even as He revealed it to us.

Having that certainty of hope, nothing can discourage us. The weakness of the disciples, their failure to understand many things, their lack of faith and even their forsaking of Him in Gethsemane, did not discourage the Lord because He saw them as they would be after Pentecost. How could Peter's unfaithfulness dishearten Him when all the time He saw Peter as he was going to be?

Thus the true hope of faith makes all the difference to us in our ministry. It makes possible joy in the midst of sorrow, confidence in the midst of defeat. It changes our attitude to those to whom we minister. We see them not as they are at the moment but as we know the Lord is going to make them. Then patience and forgiveness are easy, for we already see the Lord's finished work. It changes our prayers for them. We ask not for some little progress or partial blessing for them but for the Lord's complete victory. It changes our teaching ministry to them. Instead of fearfully giving a little more of God's truth, we confidently declare all the counsel of God. There is ever before us the joy of the finished work which we know the Lord is going to accomplish.

In Paul's prayers for the churches, he did not ask for small blessings. In his letters to them, he did not give them elementary teaching. As were Paul's faith and certainty of hope, so God

worked and carried out the fulness of His purpose.

God is ever seeking to teach us faith. He puts us in the place where it is necessary to exercise true faith and permits us to be tested and tried that we may experience His power and faithfulness. He seeks to make us instruments that He can use.

When the testing comes, does our faith prove true? Does our confidence in God become shaken and our hope prove uncertain? When the clouds have gathered and the thunder rolls and the lightning stabs the darkness and the roar of the storm is in our ears, can we keep our eyes and thoughts off the tempest and continue in the quiet and peace of His presence? When the enemy of right and truth has thrown down the gauntlet and is trampling ruthlessly upon that which affects the honour of our Lord, and when he seems about to bring ruin upon that which God has purposed, can we refrain from rushing in to strive with him, and wait for God "in quietness and confidence", with a true sense both of our own weakness and of His faithfulness and strength? When we have no word from the Lord except to wait and everything seems to be at a standstill, does the certainty of hope remain undimmed?

The manner in which we react in such circumstances reveals just what our faith is. We may have been professing much, we may have had an appearance of strength and faith and peace, but when the rough wind blows and our bark under us threatens to founder, then it is known whether we can rest confidently as He did when He slept in the storm on Galilee.

On that occasion our Lord was, as usual, going about His Father's business. The immediate objective was the casting out of Satan's power from the man with the legion of devils. Naturally, there was Satanic opposition, and our Lord's attitude to it is significant. He was in need of physical rest, so He lay down and slept. He ignored the storm and the imminent peril in which the ship was placed, not permitting it to affect in any way even His physical rest.

He did not stay awake to keep watch upon Satan's actions. He did not feel it necessary to be on the alert in case at any moment Satan might go to the extreme of putting Him and His disciples in danger. He did not fear that if things became too bad He might have to do something about it. His attitude was one of complete confidence of faith without any reservation or vacillation.

Meanwhile, the disciples were anxiously watching the storm, noting its increasing force and calculating the extent of the

danger. When the state of things became serious they were greatly disturbed. Most of them were experienced fishermen who knew the reality of the danger they were in. They began to feel that the Master was not concerning Himself sufficiently regarding the safety of the company: they doubted Him. So they wakened Him and in their anxiety and fear said, "Carest Thou not that we perish?"

The Sin of Doubting

He arose, manifested the power He possessed over the storm that never could have wrought Him harm, and then rebuked the disciples. He did not excuse them because the danger had been great; they should have known the power that was His and have "staggered not . . . through unbelief". He said to them, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" (Mark 4:40).

His attitude was severe. They had passed through a time of intense anxiety, but there is no word of comfort or consolation for them; they should not have doubted Him or been afraid. They ought to have experienced the quietness, confidence and peace that were His.

When we have gone through such a time of testing and conflict and fear, we are sorry for ourselves and feel we are due a word of sympathy. Surely the Lord will understand what we have been through and speak comfort to us. But no, we have failed at the vital point; we have sinned in doubting Him and in not having faith and our suffering has been the result of our sin. For that there can be only rebuke.

Invariably Christ rebuked lack of faith wherever He found it. When Peter, walking upon the water as he went to Christ, lost faith and began to sink, the Lord said to him, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" When the disciples were unable to cast the evil spirit out of the demon-possessed boy, His rebuke was: "O unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I endure you" (Matt. 17:17, Weymouth). To Thomas who had said he would not believe Christ had risen unless he saw and touched His wounds, He said, "Bring your finger here and feel my hands, bring your hand and put it into my side; and do not be ready to disbelieve but to believe . . . Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:27, 29, Weymouth). On the way to Emmaus, the disciples, in deep sorrow, told the stranger, whom they did not recognize to be the risen Lord, the terrible story of their loss and how amazed they were at the report brought by the women

who had found the tomb empty. But the Lord had no word of consolation for them in their sorrow. "O dull-witted men", He said to them, "with minds so slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not a necessity for the Christ thus to suffer, and then enter into His glory?" (Luke 24:25, 26, Weymouth).

Our Lord's strongest rebukes were directed against the hypocritical Pharisee and the doubting disciple. When love is weak faith is weak, and when faith is weak, hope dies. And when we walk not and serve not in the certainty of hope in the finished work that we see by faith, joy is turned into fear and light into darkness.

God's Patience

Yet how patient God is with His children in their unbelief! When His chosen people saw the enemy's hosts advancing, they were seized with panic and, instead of confidently seeking Him who had never failed them in the past, they sent to Egypt for aid. He said to them: "In returning and rest shall ye be saved: in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength". But in sorrow He had to add, "and ye would not: but ye said, No, for we will flee upon horses . . ." Then He told them what the result would be. Those who pursued would be swifter than they, and they would be left as a bare stump of a tree on a hill top, stripped of everything, an object of pity for all to behold.

But that is not all that He said to them. It was inevitable that they should reap the consequence of their lack of trust, but He would not be faithless to them: "And therefore will the Lord wait that He might be gracious unto you . . . blessed are all they that wait for Him" (Isa. 30:15-18).

In these wonderfully beautiful words God tells those who did not trust Him enough to wait for Him to help them, that He will wait for them until the results of their faithlessness cause them to remember and to trust Him again. He says in effect, "When you return to Me, you will find Me here, just where you left Me, waiting to be gracious to you". Could there be a greater evidence of God's faithful love towards His faithless children? And do we not see this same love again in the father of the prodigal son?

And so it is with us when our faith has failed. We shall find Him waiting just where we left Him—when we return to that place.

CHAPTER XVIII

"YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER"

Our Lord said "Ye shall receive power (*dunamis* — dynamic power) . . . Tarry ye . . . until ye be endued with power (*dunamis*) from on high" (Luke 24:49). It was the power of the indwelling Spirit of God manifested through the believer that He spoke of: power from on high—from the Throne of God.

This Power dwells in every true believer in Christ. By this Power he has been regenerated (Tit. 3:6; 2 Pet. 1:4) and baptized into the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). It is in this Power that he must live and work and bear spiritual fruit (Gal. 5:22, 23; 1 Thess. 1:5; Rom. 8:11-16). The Spirit of God is our strength, our intelligence, our wisdom, our guide. It is He who manifests Christ in us and carries out the Lord's work through us. The Christian faith is spiritual, supernatural. The believer who is not walking and serving in the power of the Spirit is doing so in the flesh.

We are told that, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9). We do not need to pray for the Holy Spirit to come in; He is in us already. Those of us who believe are "sealed with that holy Spirit of promise". So Paul assures us in Ephesians 1:14; but then, in that same Epistle he warns us, "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (4:30). The Holy Spirit is within us but it is possible that we grieve Him and prevent Him from filling us.

At Pentecost the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were assembled together waiting for Him and they were baptized with the Spirit. We, also, are all baptized into the Body of Christ, the Church, "For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13).

However, we find those who were baptized with the Spirit at Pentecost being filled again with the Spirit not very long afterwards: "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31). These men and women had not been without the Spirit, but they needed to be filled again to face the crisis that had arisen. The filling with the Spirit is something that needs to be continually sought, because, no matter what task God gives us or what situation we face, no lesser equipment will serve than

the fulness of the Spirit. And the cost of having that fulness must ever be met anew.

A general lack of adequate teaching in the churches regarding the Holy Spirit, His work and His place in the life and service of the believer, together with the prejudice against such teaching created by the manifest errors, extravagances and abuses of some who claim to possess the power of the Spirit, have left many of God's people in ignorance of vital truth.

Many realize that there is something lacking in their lives and ministry and long for a deeper experience and a power that is more real. Some, because of this sense of need and lack of true knowledge are led astray by unsound teachers. Many more seek, in great efforts and programmes, in eloquence, psychology and emotional excitement, the power that they lack.

The Grace-gifts, or manifestations, of the Spirit for the ministry of the Gospel are still with us. It is through the manifestation of the Spirit in the members of His Body that Christ would reveal Himself, His manifold wisdom and infinite power, in the Church (Eph. 3:10; 1 Cor. 2:4). It is by the power of His Spirit that He would build His Church (Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 12:3-8). Grace-gifts of the Spirit are given to every true believer by the Spirit, as He wills, for the carrying out of the ministry in the place God has placed him in the Church (1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 18).¹

The Word teaches us that, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 4:11). It was thus at Pentecost. It was thus that the members of the Church in Jerusalem proclaimed the Word to the salvation of souls. It was thus that God's people, in ever increasing number, spread the Gospel throughout the world in New Testament times so that the Church grew and prospered.

Powerlessness

We can, of course, do religious works in our own strength. We can be exceedingly busy doing many things for God in our own wisdom. But man doing works for God and God manifesting His power in the doing of His work by His Spirit through a yielded servant are two vastly different things.

The truth of this was forced in upon us when we first arrived

¹ The gifts of the Spirit are dealt with fully by the Author in *The New Testament Order for Church and Missionary*.

upon the mission field forty years ago. The call had been clear and unmistakable. As we went forward to the field, travelling through the submarine blockade of the first world war, there was the inward peace and joy of an absolute assurance of being in God's will. There were still, however, things, chiefly concerning the will, that were not fully yielded.

When we arrived on the field and began the work of witness amid the opposing forces of Satan, we became conscious of the fact that we lacked power. We were plunged into a situation that was exceedingly difficult and trying. We soon realized that we were face to face with something beyond our own power and ability and knew that we must be filled with the Spirit for personal victory and for service. It was perfectly clear to us that unless the Lord undertook for us and we could know what it was to be "filled with the Spirit" we would not be able to continue on the mission field but would fail and be forced to return home.

It was possible, of course, to continue preaching and teaching, but we knew it would be without true spiritual power. We longed to see spiritual fruit and to experience continual power and victory in the warfare against the spiritual powers of evil. We longed for the real presence of the Living God.

We had been born again by the Spirit and knew that the Spirit of God dwelt within, but we were deeply conscious of the fact that the experience of the fulness of the Spirit's power was lacking. Paul was conscious that his witness to the Gospel was not "in word only but also in power and in much assurance" (1 Thess. 1:5).

Though keenly realizing his own insufficiency, so that, as he wrote to the Corinthians, "I was among you in fear and in much trembling", yet he could declare that his speech and his preaching had been, "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power".

It was this evidence of the Spirit's presence and the authoritative power of the Spirit's utterance that was lacking in our ministry and that we knew we must have. In distress, we sought the Lord in prayer that we might be "filled with the Spirit". As day after day and week after week we were before the Lord our distress increased.

We did not know what exactly was the nature of what we sought or just how to recognize it when it was received. But we were looking for something that would be felt—some marvelous spiritual experience,

Surrender

In the first place, there was a personal struggle. The Holy Spirit convicted us of a lack of yieldedness. We were willing for God's will in all but one thing. The thing in itself was not wrong. It was something we did not wish to do, something that, actually, the Lord has never asked us to do, but it was not for us to tell the Lord what we would or would not do. It was necessary to surrender without reservations. In that one thing we wished to keep the control in our own hands, fearing and being unwilling, so far as that was concerned, to yield to Christ's lordship.

The Lord dealt with us in faithfulness through the Spirit's convicting power and we saw that surrender must be absolute: that our will, our choice, our judgment must be on the Cross. Finally, though only after a hard battle, we came to the place of complete surrender. We knew full well that we could not of ourselves make such a surrender and continue in the place of surrender, but we did so in faith, trusting in the Lord to accomplish it.

It was then that light came. The Lord spoke as we knelt before Him and clearly we heard a voice say: "It is by faith not by feeling". Understanding was given in that moment and we saw that we were looking for feeling, for some ecstatic experience, instead of taking by faith what was already provided. We accepted by faith what God has promised in His Word—that as we, in faith, had fully yielded to Him, He would manifest His power in us, give victory, and, as we went on with Him, accomplish through us all that was according to His purpose. There was no ecstatic experience, but from that day we were conscious of a power and authority that there had not been before.

There has, of course, been a continual need of "abiding" in Him, of daily facing the Cross and surrendering unto death. The flesh is not dead nor has there been no failure; but there has ever been a consciousness of the Spirit's presence and power, revealing, cleansing, teaching, working and leading, yea, continually urging forward to the accomplishment of God's purposes.

In testifying to this experience, we would place the emphasis, not upon the manner of God's dealing with us personally, but upon the absolute need of such a surrender in every life. The Lord deals with each one of His children individually. He leads no two in exactly the same way. But the basic spiritual principles remain unchangeable: there must first be the facing of the

Cross in full surrender and then the acceptance by faith of the abundant life and victory which is already ours in Christ. To be filled with the Holy Spirit means simply that all else, all that is of self, is surrendered that we may be filled with Him. He is in us and when He does not fill us it is because something of ourselves is preventing Him from doing so. That something, no matter what it is, must be removed. There is no other condition for His filling.

There can be no substitute in our life or ministry for the power of the Spirit. It is essential that every one who would serve God know from experience what it is to be filled with the Spirit. The lack of it explains the spiritual ineffectiveness in many lives and the lack of fruit. No one can be fully used of God without it. All who have been greatly used of God have testified that they had to go to the place of surrender and be filled with the Spirit and that to continue to be used they have had to remain in that place. They have told how that before they had been powerless in life and ministry but that afterwards their ministry was transformed through the evident manifestation of the Spirit's power.

The one thing which keeps God's people from being filled with the Spirit is the cost, which self fears. Satan deludes us into believing that the cost is great. It is not. It is the exchanging of the "filthy rags" of our own wisdom and strength for Christ's glorious power. It is laying aside carnal weapons of warfare for those that are spiritual. It is entering into another realm where the victory of the Cross of Christ is no more powerless doctrine but a mighty, triumphant reality, to the authority of which Satan must bow. It is entering into co-operation through the Spirit with God in His own mighty work.

PART V

SERVING IN THE SPIRIT

*"They that worship Him must worship Him
in spirit and in truth".—Jn. 4:24.*

*"Ye shall receive power after that the Holy
Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be
witnesses unto Me".—Acts 1:8.*

SOULISH SERVICE

Having Confidence in the Flesh

Depending upon the human instrument -
Soul and Body - for results

Depending upon:

- (1) The heart - to influence, sway, attract.
- (2) The Mind - for knowledge, understanding, wisdom to guide, convince.
- (3) The Will - to control, sway, bring to pass, dominate.
- (4) The Body - to attract, influence.

This is displayed in eloquence, learning, personality, psychology, ceremonies, ritual, programs, emotionalism, sentimentalism, showmanship.

In this service Man is seen instead of the Lord. Self-glory is sought. It is not the Lord working, but Man working for the Lord.

SPIRITUAL SERVICE

Having Confidence Only in the Spirit
Depending upon the Holy Spirit alone for results, soul and body being yielded as an instrument in His hands.

The Dependence of:

- (1) The heart is upon God's love to influence, sway, attract.
- (2) The Mind is upon the Holy Spirit for knowledge, understanding, wisdom and to guide and convince.
- (3) The Will is upon the Holy Spirit to control, sway, bring to pass, dominate.
- (4) The Body is upon the beauty and strength of the Lord to attract, influence.

This gives no place for the "enticing words of man's wisdom," but displays the "power and demonstration of the Spirit."

In this service Man is not seen but the Lord. The Lord's glory is sought. It is the Lord's working by the power of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER XIX

SOULISH SERVICE

The soul powers can function under three distinct conditions: they may be independent, God-controlled or Satan-controlled. Actually, it can hardly be said that the soul acts independently, for, consciously or unconsciously, every soul that is not under the guidance of the Spirit of God is under Satanic influence. The independence that the soulish man thinks he has and prides himself in is actually a deception. If our faculties are not yielded to God as instruments of righteousness, they will be used by Satan as instruments of unrighteousness.

Soulish ministry is service in which the soul powers are not truly yielded to the Holy Spirit and act, partly at least, for man's glory. They claim to be serving God but act upon their own authority and depend upon their own powers and, deep down in their heart, self makes its demands.

Paul said, "I will pray with the Spirit and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the Spirit and I will sing with understanding also" (1 Cor. 14:15). In spiritual ministry, the faculties participate as tools of the Holy Spirit. That participation on our part must be voluntary and intelligent. In the Scriptures, we find that God could use the men and women who were His instruments only as they entered willingly and understandingly into His work. As we have seen, God is love and the fellowship in service which love seeks must be willing and intelligent.

It was such service that our Lord rendered to the Father. His full personal participation in it was essential. What made His ministry to the Father perfect was His perfect love. Never did self-love tinge a word or act. His perfect love made it possible for Him to understand the purpose of perfect love and to enter fully into carrying it out. In Him we see the perfect co-operation of the soul with God under the direction of the Spirit. Every word He spoke was from God; every work was done in the power of the Spirit (Jn. 14:9-12).

We are co-workers with the Lord and the purity of our fellowship in service with Him through His Spirit depends entirely upon the love or self-love that enters into it. The two-edged sword that divides between soul and Spirit must be applied to our service, and, when it is, much is revealed as impure that we may have thought was true service. Wherever self-love with its

pride, self-sufficiency, self-confidence and desire for glory, personal interest and comfort, touches our service, our ministry ceases to be purely spiritual. The Holy Spirit can never manifest Himself through our self-love nor use our faculties for our self-glory.

When we humbly permit Him to search our hearts in this matter, we find that there is much to hinder Him greatly in His efforts to use us, with the result that there is no little "wood, hay and stubble" in that which we build. And we shall find that there is very much in the Church today that is not true spiritual service. It is ministry and worship in which self makes large demands.

Our Lord sought nothing for self. With Him, self was entirely on the altar, a sacrifice yielded by perfect love. His exaltation came because He humbled self in an absolute sacrifice. True fruit and true exaltation can come to the believer only through such a sacrifice of self. The objective of love's service can never be obtained by self-love. Any self-love in our Lord's ministry would have made impossible the accomplishing of our salvation. It would have completely nullified His whole witness. Would that we might see the tragedy of the failure in our service through the self-love that enters in and robs it of the perfect accomplishment of that which the Lord intended! True love and self-love can never mix, never co-operate. Each must inevitably bear its own fruit, the one unto life, the other unto death.

Self is so dearly loved by the soulish heart and self-love is so subtle in its manifestations, in its reasoning and in its acts, that we may easily be deceived. It can feign the deepest piety. It can manifest the greatest enthusiasm in the work of the Lord. It can be plausible and attractive. Yet, in the inner heart, it occupies the throne.

While both Satan and the soulish heart are subtle in their deceptions, God has not left us defenceless against them. He has provided the gift of "discernment of spirits". The Holy Spirit who is in us witnesses clearly against that which is false and we have but to be willing to listen to His voice.

Soulish Aids

The weakness in ministry today is due to the lack of the Holy Spirit's power and that is due to the extent to which man is acting independently of the Spirit, presuming to do God's work by his own soul powers and glorying in his own work.

At the founding of the Church, the Apostles delivered to it

the doctrine which they had received from Christ and established it according to the pattern which He had revealed to them. They also demonstrated the manner in which the work of the Gospel should be carried on, as the Lord had taught them by His own example. But Apostolic doctrine and the Apostolic organization of the Church have both been violated by man's wisdom. The Apostolic principles of the ministry of the Gospel have been largely abandoned.¹ They are considered impracticable for today. Their cost to the flesh is too great. Man accepts God's Word as authoritative only to the extent that he considers it reasonable to do so; he considers its teaching mandatory only in so far as he judges it practical and desirable. And, naturally, the human intelligence judges that which is truly spiritual as impractical (1 Cor. 2:14). While he will subscribe to spiritual truth as doctrine, he will deny it in practice.

For the true power of the Spirit of God, man substitutes what is termed psychology. Through the employment of the soul powers he seeks to influence the emotions and the mind and produce spiritual fruit. The Holy Spirit influences the emotions and the mind, but He does so to bring them into true dependence upon and co-operation with Himself.

Paul said, "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:4, 5). The fruit produced by the preaching of the Gospel in man's power is unsound. Men may be saved through hearing the Word of God that it contains but, unless they get purer light later, their dependence for life and service will be upon human power and not upon "the power and demonstration of the Spirit". Paul (in spite of the Corinthian's demand for it) refused to permit any human wisdom to enter into his ministry for that reason—because he wanted purely spiritual fruit: converts who had seen the power of the Spirit demonstrated and expected to experience it in their own lives and ministry. He did not accept the popular reasoning: "It is legitimate to use any means that will bring souls to Christ". He very definitely considered it was not legitimate to do so.

Today, too often, among orthodox Christians, oratory, emotionalism, entertainment of one kind or another, sballow, sentimental hymns and choruses, are the human tools used for

¹ See *The New Testament Order for Church and Missionary*, by the Author.

attracting an audience, "creating an atmosphere" and "bringing revival". We read of men lauded as great preachers with eloquence and powerful personalities that win men, of "charm courses" for girls in Bible School, of meetings among young people during which "soft music" accompanies the preaching, "the music rising to a crescendo" at the crucial moment as in the cinematograph show. But it is not necessary to go to such extremes to be soulish in ministry. In much more subtle ways the flesh may enter in and manifest itself.

Why are such tools used? There are several reasons. To use them it is not necessary to pay the cost of being filled with the Holy Spirit. It is much easier to use them than to walk in such obedience to the Holy Spirit that He will have freedom to manifest Himself through us. It is not necessary to have active faith nor to prevail in prayer to use them. With them it is easy to rouse emotions and get "results". It is pleasant to the soul-man to use them. They allow a full display of man's cleverness. The flesh can glory in them even while it says piously (not without a lurking boast) that the results are the work of the Holy Spirit. The eloquent preacher, the learned teacher or the self-assured "good mixer" with the winning smile occupies the center of the stage. It is all done in the Lord's Name but the glory is not His alone.

All of these soulish aids are absolutely unnecessary where the real power of the Holy Spirit is present. They provide a substitute, a counterfeit, for the real power and rob us of the very thing that we seek. They rob us of the power of the Spirit of the Living God whose presence was so manifest in the early Church and in the great revivals that have followed. When He has been at work, man has been but an instrument daring not to intrude the flesh, moved by a power that he knew was higher than his. The glory was the Lord's alone and man was humbled before Him. And the souls that were saved were gloriously saved and the Spirit filled them and spoke through them. Their faith stood because it was based upon a true foundation.

Psychology

What power are we really relying upon? Is our claim that our reliance is wholly upon the Holy Spirit true? To what extent are we trusting in our own soul powers?

One of the most popular soulish aids in the Gospel ministry now is what is termed "pastoral psychology". There is a psychology that is Divine—the psychology of love: "I drew them with

the cords of a man, with the bands of love" (Hos. 11:4). This psychology finds its supreme manifestation in the Cross of Christ. It is more inclusive, more powerful, more fruitful than is generally realized. It is the master psychology, the perfect, pure psychology of absolute wisdom and knowledge, offering to man that which he desperately needs.

But there is a psychology that is purely soulish—of the fallen, sin-blighted soul, selfish and hateful. To the young man ambitious of advancing in business the advice is given, "Call your elder and superior by his first name. Greet him with, 'Hello, young man!' It brings him down to your level and gives you a psychological advantage over him." Such psychology is from the pit. It is degrading and demoralizing. It studies the reactions of the soul in its fallen state and seeks to make capital out of them. There is much of it these days.

Subtle forms of this psychology are advocated among ministers of the Gospel. A certain congregation sent a pulpit committee to interview a candidate for the ministry. On the committee was a Scottish woman, of definite convictions and plain speech, who insisted on questioning the candidate until he reluctantly admitted disbelief in fundamental doctrines. When he was told that the congregation would object to his doctrine, he replied, "But I can dress my sermons so that there will be no difficulty". The answer he received was, "And when you enter the presence of God how will you dress your excuses?"

His policy was to say nothing that would be unacceptable to anyone and everything possible that would be pleasing to everyone. He would have sought to "manage" everyone and keep everyone happy. To "diplomatic" sermons he would have added adroit words of commendation and flattery to all and so everything would have worked smoothly. It behoves us to be on our guard that no psychology of that nature, no matter what form it may take, enters into our ministry.

God has so ordered that there are many different types and capacities among men and it is natural that we should depend upon any talent nature has given us. The disciples our Lord chose differed greatly in temperament and natural talent. It matters little what type we may be by nature. The real question is, how much is there in our ministry that is soulish?

Trappings and Traditions

Much that is not truly spiritual is so linked with the usual

set-up of things in the Church that it is hardly perceived, or, if it is, is regarded as unavoidable.

Here is a young preacher who has just finished his studies and received his diploma. In his studies a strong emphasis was placed upon secular knowledge to the neglect of the study of Scripture and spiritual experience. However, he is true in doctrine and seeks the salvation of souls.

He is ambitious to be a successful preacher, which will mean, ultimately, an important church and corresponding salary, and, possibly, some fame. To him the ministry is a profession in which competition is not excluded. Ability counts, and to the most able—the greatest orators and organizers—come the greatest prizes. And he intends to succeed.

He seeks to be popular and to attract an audience. He stands before his audience self-confident, authoritative. He orders his services so as to impress and entertain. He has been taught the elements of song leading, so he wields the baton impressively, or has someone else do so. Now and then a smart quip creates a laugh. (He confides to a brother preacher that he considers it "necessary to have three jokes at intervals in the sermon to keep the audience awake and happy".) The audience seems to like it and to be satisfied. They accept it as spiritual religion.

That young preacher is, of course, only one type. There are many others. There is the preacher whose appeal is to the emotional. The hymns he chooses, the tone of his voice, his illustrations and the presentation of his message are all calculated to stir the emotions. Another is scholarly and by bearing, learning and carefully marshalled thought and reasoning, endeavours to impress and persuade. Then there is the fighter, the controversialist, the crusader who would lead his forces in a frontal attack against the enemy, exposing and denouncing error and defending the truth. There is the politician, the psychologist, who by his skill in handling men would build up his congregation. There is the organizer who through organized effort would produce life and success.

Soulish Methods

How persistent the soulish mind and fleshly energy are in seeking to accomplish that which only the Spirit of God can do! They will weaken the ministry of the most spiritual and rob it of its richest fruit.

We attended a missionary conference where many godly people were gathered together. The fellowship was rich. Yet behind the

scenes there were some things that were not the true work of the Spirit of God. There was a scarcely concealed rivalry between officials and missionaries of different Missions and not a little wire-pulling and lobbying to secure the most and best opportunities to present their claims from the platform. In the messages there was a note of salesmanship, the evident desire to attract as much support as possible to the speaker's Society.

In a big fundamentalist church, proud of its missionary giving, the annual Missionary Conference was being held. It was really their annual drive for obtaining contributions and pledges for their missionary fund. The stage was set with all the skill the pastor, a good organizer, could command to draw a crowd, create enthusiasm, stir the emotions and draw from the audience as big a contribution as possible.

The principal missionary speaker understood the part he was to play. The skilful weaving of the spiritual and material needs of the heathen, heart-rending stories of cruelty, suffering and degradation, stirring accounts of the Gospel's power, combined with references to missionary hardships, would touch hearts and produce the emotional reaction necessary to obtain a generous offering.

But the missionary felt he could not do that. He believed that giving to God's work should be under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and not the result of the stirring of the emotions. He presented the claims of the heathen upon the Christian from the standpoint of the Cross upon which Christ surrendered His all even unto death, and made it clear that as the full claims of the Cross upon the believer were met the claims of the heathen upon him would not be neglected.

There were those in the audience who were disappointed. They would rather have had their emotions stirred. The offering was bigger than usual. But still the pastor felt that the choice of the missionary speaker had been unfortunate.

Spell-binding

A sincere Christian business man, referring to speakers at a popular summer Bible Conference, said, "They are just highly-paid, professional spell-binders". That criticism may have been extreme, and yet is there not rather more than "a grain of truth" in it? And the truth which it contains is as condemning to those who attend such Conferences as to those who minister the Word at them. For where there is not the Corinthian demand for wisdom

and eloquence there might not be the same temptation to pander to it.

A lady who was seeking a deeper knowledge of spiritual truth said, "We go to Conference and we have a lovely time. The fellowship is enjoyable and the messages seem good at the time, interesting and stirring, but when one is back home nothing seems to have remained. There seems to have been nothing lasting and one goes on living just as one was before, just as hungry, just as unsatisfied, with just as little victory".

But that is not true of all Conferences. One we attended once was not large in numbers. Those who ministered the Word were not particularly well known. The leaders, a group of godly men, made time daily for what they considered the most important thing—prayer. They prayed definitely and expected answers. Upon that prayer ministry rather than upon the teaching they counted for results.

Always quite a few young people, some unconverted, some unyielded to the Lord, were present at these Conferences. One or two might be restive, even rebellious at first. It was a rule that the Conference meetings must be attended. Ample time was allowed for recreation. The rule was enforced but the young people were not preached at. However, unknown to them, they were kept before the Lord daily in prayer by the leaders and claimed definitely for Him. It was seldom that any young person left that Conference unsaved or unyielded to Christ. And many of God's people have carried away from that place blessing to bear fruit through a deeper knowledge of the Word and a closer walk with Him.

Seemingly great things may be done. We may have a big Bible Conference, a wonderful sermon, a stirring missionary appeal, but how much of it was the true work of the Spirit of God? How much has gone deeper than the emotions, than the soul, touching the living God and producing spiritual fruit that will abide to eternity?

It is a fatal mistake to reckon the spiritual importance of a meeting or Conference by the great attendance, the enthusiasm, the emotional reactions, the large offering. Has it left the memory of something big, something to take pride in, of emotions stirred, or do we remember that the Lord spoke and we received something from the Spirit of God that has remained and grown and borne imperishable, spiritual fruit?

Soulish Worship

The proud, soulish heart seeks to take hold of every part of

our worship and service. In public prayer we are tempted to speak to those who hear instead of to God. The Pharisees loved to make long prayers in public, seeking the praise of men, and the human heart has not changed since then. Our Lord's public prayers were very brief. He spent long hours in private prayer, but in public He dealt only with that which was essential at the moment. Not a word was added for adornment. There were no formal phrases, but a simple, definite petition addressed to the Father. The formal, beautifully worded prayer does not bring power to our gatherings. It is when, in public prayer, we seek to speak to God alone and to say only that which the Holy Spirit gives liberty to say, that we realize how strong and persistent the temptation is to speak for the audience to hear. We add formal phrases, or preach a little, or comment on the message, or wander off into indefinite petitions without knowing whether they are the Holy Spirit's prayer, or having any assurance that they will be answered. Such prayer is not true, Holy Spirit-guided prayer and causes us to lose much blessing. A brief, humble prayer in God's will gains no glory for the one who prays but it brings the answer in the power of God.

The singing of the Lord's praise is enjoined in Scripture. It is a natural expression of the Christian's joy and is pleasing to the Lord. It can be used by the Holy Spirit to God's glory, but how often is it largely, and even wholly, soulish. The song used by the Holy Spirit on one occasion to carry comfort or conviction to the heart may, on another, be but the instrument of soulish pleasure or of the heart's vanity, producing only emotional reactions.

There is as subtle a danger in soulish singing as in soulish preaching. There may be the stirring of what may be described as a religious feeling that is entirely soulish. A skilful song-leader may easily create such an atmosphere. There is, undoubtedly, emotional pleasure in it. It produces a pleasant religious sensation and a feeling of detachment and self-satisfaction. This is a very different thing from the true spiritual joy created by the influence of the Holy Spirit, for the joy that is the fruit of the Spirit brings no self-satisfaction. It is a joy in which there is a full recognition of sinfulness and utter unworthiness but rejoices in the presence and comfort and love and strength of the One who alone is worthy—the joy of knowing Him and fellowshiping with Him.

We have often witnessed the soulish religious fervour of the heathen as they have intoned their chants and performed their

ceremonies. Their fervour was real. Their emotions were deeply stirred, sometimes to the point of fanaticism. Yet there was nothing spiritual in their worship; it was wholly in the soulish realm. It was just emotions of the human soul stirred by religious ceremonies.

During many years of Gospel ministry in Roman Catholic lands, we have come to understand the basis of the powerful appeal of that Church. Its worship is entirely in the soulish realm. The appeal is to the superstitious element in the soul. The mysterious ceremonies performed by vested priests entoning ritual in an unknown tongue, the signs and symbols and prayer-formulae, the dark interior of the church building illuminated by the soft light of candles, the multitude of miracle-working saints around which superstition has woven the most fantastic histories, and all that combined with the purely mechanical nature of the worship, consisting in attendance at Mass, the performance of ceremonies, the giving of alms, the repeating of prayers, pilgrimages and the keeping of certain saint's days, constitutes a religion that does not touch the inner life of the spirit. In that religion no spiritual re-birth is demanded or taught; therefore there is no walk in the Spirit and no fruit of the Spirit. A man's whole life may be entirely soulish and even evil, but if he faithfully complies with the external rites of his religion, his obligation is fulfilled and his church is satisfied.

The fact that we call ourselves Christian and Protestant does not exempt us from the danger of a religion that is, at least in part, soulish. Since Cain presented his offering of human works, man has sought to offer soulish service and worship. Never has it been acceptable to God, and man has always resented God's rejection of it. When Nadab and Abihu offered "strange fire" before the Lord, they were slain (Lev. 10:1-3). Instead of taking of the fire on the altar, which had been kindled from Heaven, they made fire themselves. The fire on the altar represented the Holy Spirit; the incense typified worship. The offering of "strange fire" and "strange incense" was prohibited (Ex. 30:9, 38). The creating of religious feeling by human means instead of by the power of the Holy Spirit and the offering of the soul's works in worship are forbidden and the penalty is death. And spiritual death has been the penalty in the Church.

How much there is that is called spiritual that is but counterfeit! How many of the Lord's people are seeking to touch the living God and fail to find Him and to satisfy the longing for true fellowship with Him. And how much there is in church life

and ministry today that is not real but merely a substitute for the true presence and activity of the Holy Spirit.

We are given superficial forms instead of the real substance. Theoretically we believe in God's presence, but we find only a mere stirring of the emotions. We are told of the Spirit's power, but we see results produced by showmanship, oratory and emotionalism. We are counselled to depend upon the Spirit, but in practice dependence really is upon human wisdom, ability, personality and programs. What we get is not really God, but human feelings and efforts. We do not get through, behind all that is of man, to touch the living God.

How much there is in the trappings of our religion, in our service, our preaching and singing, and efforts and zeal, that is just of man! It does not satisfy the Spirit who is in us and who cries, "Abba, Father". It is but a substitute, a counterfeit that keeps us from God. Instead of bread we are given a stone. Man glories in it. It is of his powers, he can produce it. But, O, how it robs him of God and leaves him utterly, wretchedly poor!

True worship and service can be offered only through the Spirit. Our Lord said, "The hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth" (John 4:23, 24; Phil. 3:3; Rom. 1:9; 7:6; John 6:63; 1 Cor. 2:9-11; Rom. 8:26; Eph. 6:18; Jude 19, 20; Cf. "strange fire"—Lev. 10:1-3; 1 Pet. 2:5).

True worship in the Spirit gives us God and gives us Christ. It gives us not a sterile, emotional counterfeit but the living God himself. In it there is no glory to man but only to God. The soul and its wisdom and works are judged and condemned and yielded to the Cross and Christ alone is seen. And so it is in all true spiritual service. Man steps back and the Lord alone is manifested in the glory and purity of His love and power.

CHAPTER XX

THE COST OF TRUE MINISTRY

We have seen that the true fellowship of love is in love's work to produce the fruits of love. We have seen man repudiate this in Eden for the sake of self-interest. We have beheld Christ's perfect witness to it in His life, in Gethsemane, and at the Cross. Now we must consider our participation in it.

God's purpose for man in the beginning was a full fellowship with Him in His works of love. Now, in the redeemed, in whom the indwelling Spirit of God would manifest Christ, God's purpose is the effecting of the renewal of this fellowship with Him.

It is evident that this fellowship with God in His work can be only on one plane. It can only be in the true work of perfect love. God cannot stoop to use in His work the self-love that would manifest itself in our heart. For fellowship with Him in His work there must be the manifesting of Christ in our life. All of the redeemed are called to fellowship with Christ in the work of the Gospel. Let us remember that it is a fellowship in the work of perfect love.

The Essence of Witness

This is a very practical matter. He who ministers in the work of the Gospel, who witnesses to the pure light and truth that God has revealed, must give a true example in his life both to the Divine principle of selfless love and against the Satanic principle of self-love. This costs. It must be seen not only that the one who witnesses is willing for that cost but also that his triumph over it through Christ brings the true fruit of love. Christ did so. And He said, "As the Father hath sent Me so send I you".

The slightest touch of the principle of self-love in Christ's actions would have meant the negation of His teaching. It is more important to the world and to the Church than is generally realized that the example of the one who ministers in the Gospel be entirely free from any influence of the Satanic principle. If the principle he witnesses to does not fully control his life and bear its fruit, but, on the contrary, evidence is given of the presence of the principle and fruit of self-love, then his words are contradicted and lose any practical value.

"For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's".

So wrote Paul to the Philippians. There is sadness and disappointment in these words of the old missionary. He was confessing that there were few willing to pay the cost of a true ministry to the churches. What he wrote was this: "But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus to you shortly, that I also may be cheered, by learning your state; for I have no other like-minded with me, who would care in earnest for your concerns; for all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. But you know the trials which have proved his worth..." (Phil. 2:19-22, Conybeare).

This is a revealing statement. Paul's recommendation of Timothy was on the ground of the practical witness of his life, which was well known to the churches—"Ye know the proof of him". It is not his eloquence, knowledge or talents that are mentioned but the demonstrated proof that he sought nothing of his own but only Christ—and this he had shown through many trials.

This is the true basis for judging the work and spiritual worth of a servant of Christ. Paul would not have recommended anyone to the churches who could not meet this test, no matter how eloquent or talented or instructed he might have been. It is a hard test, but it is the true one.

The Life is the Light

John witnesses of Christ that, "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). It is not His spoken message that is stated here to be the light, but the life that was seen to be in Him: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

The spoken message, the teaching, was just one expression of the life, an outcome of it, a part of it, not something apart from it and differing from it. Without the life, the spoken message would have been valueless; it would not have had practical meaning or authority.

"He that hath seen the Father", He said, "I am in the Father and the Father in Me. The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works" (John 14:9, 10). The manifestation of the Father in Him was not only in words but in works—in all that He did and said.

The Cost of Witness

We all know the importance of a background. A right setting

of a jewel will display the glory of its beauty. An artist is at infinite pains to make sure that the background he gives to the portrait he paints will display and not detract from the features he would depict.

God has given us an image and likeness of Himself. Christ is "the express image of His person". And God set that image into a background that revealed the fulness of its glory. Without that background, we would know God but imperfectly.

It is written of our Lord, "For it became Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10). Conybeare states that "consummated", not "perfect", expresses the true meaning here. Our Lord was not imperfect; He did not have to be perfected. But the witness He gave before men, the truth which He taught, was consummated—perfected or completed, made real and actual—by the life which He lived, facing victoriously the worst that Satan and man could do.

Through the things which He suffered He revealed God to man. Through it true life was manifested and the truth He taught was changed from what would be merely theoretic teaching to that which was of practical application to everyday life. There was nothing that He taught that He did not manifest fully in His life. His teaching was given not only in words but by everything that He did.

This was an exceedingly costly ministry. To live what He taught cost Him the Cross. What did it cost Him to exercise the humility, patience and lowliness of heart that He taught? He was not teaching a theoretic perfection that He did not believe to be fully practicable. But the living of the truth in Satan's world, amongst men controlled by self and Satan, cost Him dear.

He taught absolute trust in the loving Heavenly Father. He said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:28-31, 33).

If the Lord had brought gold from Heaven, could He have

proved what He taught? To give a practical witness to these truths it was necessary that He have no earthly riches to depend upon. Had He even been comfortably provided for in the manner of that day with a house and servant and an income that secured Him from want, could we have known the purity of His humility? He became poor; He had not where to lay His head. Against that background God displayed the true meaning of love in which self has no place. As our Lord lived by faith, receiving from God day by day the supply of His every need, we are shown the practical power of true faith, and it is proved to us that the God of love is able and willing to care for us.

One of the temptations with which Satan faced Him in the desert was to turn the stones into bread. By His own power He could have created all the supply and riches He needed, but He refused to exercise that power. He had come to manifest the truth of God's faithfulness, not His own power. So He lived with great simplicity and self-denial, trusting the Father directly for the supply of His every need and making it evident that the supply came from the Father.

And He led His disciples to live as He did and to give the same witness. Peter said, "Have we not left all to follow Thee?" Then later, continuing this same witness, after his Lord had ascended into glory, he said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6).

Our Lord taught the love of God. What did it cost Him to teach it by His life? It cost Him the absolute sacrifice of His all. The awful sin of self-love that nailed Him on the Cross is the background against which we see the manifestation of God's perfect love. Out of the suffering of the Cross, there is revealed the selflessness, the purity and the transcendent beauty of perfect love. In the triumph of the Cross over the worst that Satan could do, we behold the absolute, deathless, unconquerable power of that love. Against no other background could that revelation have been given.

Could we have understood any of these great truths which our Lord taught had He not lived them fully? We could not. It is through their demonstration in His life that we have come to understand them. Could not His witness have been given at lesser cost? We know it could not. Not even the Lord of glory, almighty and all-wise, could have done so. Truly it was by the things which He suffered that His witness was consummated.

The suffering which He endured was not good; it was evil.

It was caused by Satan and man's selfish heart. It was not due to asceticism or the self-denial of a religious man. It came because, when the light of that life was manifested in the midst of this darkness, the darkness comprehended it not and received it not, and hated it, seeking to destroy it.

What then is the good that that suffering has accomplished, if it was all the work of evil? Through it the witness was consummated. How? Through the manifestation of the truth and triumph of all that our Lord taught, no matter how great might be the darkness, the opposition or the suffering. He demonstrated that in the midst of the suffering, in the midst of the worst that Satan and man could do, God's truth was triumphant; that it was practical and fully sufficient for all we might have to face in our daily lives.

The Cost to God's Servants

But now, what of the witness of the servant of the Lord? To what does he witness and to what extent must his life be the light which he bears? Paul wrote,

And even now I rejoice in the afflictions which I bear for your sake, and I fill up what yet is lacking of the sufferings of Christ in my flesh, on behalf of His body, which is the Church; whereof I was made a servant, to minister in the stewardship which God gave me for you, that I might fulfil it by declaring the Word of God, the mystery which has been hid for ages and generations, but has now been shown openly to His saints; to whom God willed to manifest how rich, among the Gentiles, is the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you the hope of glory (Col. 1:24-27, Conybeare).

Was there anything lacking in the sufferings of Christ for our salvation? Could Paul add anything to Christ's redeeming work? Obviously not. What then are the sufferings that are lacking? Paul says that it is "for His body's sake, which is the Church" that they are lacking. The Church still needs to see in Christ's servants the continuation of the testimony manifested in Christ's life. It greatly needs to see demonstrated the truth of the indwelling Christ!

Paul goes on to state that the ministry he was called to give to the church was the manifesting of the revealed mystery, which is "Christ in you"—the living Christ dwelling within you. His witness to the indwelling Christ could not be by word only. It could not be by the teaching of doctrinal truth only. In bearing witness to that life he must live it. The living Christ must be seen living in him.

As we consider Paul's life we see that it was so. There was

nothing that he taught the churches that he did not manifest in his life. He was a missionary, a church-planter, and the church-planter's ministry to the church is that of bearing a full witness to the reality and sufficiency of the indwelling life of Christ.

The cost of this was great. As it had been with our Lord, it meant suffering. Paul's witness also was consummated by the things which he suffered—its reality was made manifest, not in a life protected from trial and difficulty, with every need provided for, but through having nothing to depend upon but God and manifesting before the churches the truth of God's Word and the full sufficiency of the life of the indwelling Christ to meet every need, trial, opposition, danger or temptation.

Writing of his ministry, Paul states,

For I take heed to give no cause of stumbling, lest blame should be cast on the ministration wherein I serve; but in all things I commend myself as one who ministers to God's service; in steadfast endurance, in afflictions, in necessities, in straitness of distress, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in sleepless watchings, in hunger and thirst; in purity, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in (the gifts of) the Holy Spirit, in love unfeigned; speaking the word of truth, working with the power of God, fighting with the weapons of righteousness, both for attack and for defence; through good report and evil, through honour and through infamy; counted as a deceiver, yet being true; as unknown (by man), yet acknowledged (by God); as ever dying, yet behold I live; as chastened by suffering, yet not destroyed; as sorrowful, yet ever filled with joy; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. 6:3-10, Conybeare).

Paul was no visionary mystic. He was a most wise and practical church-planter. He was not an enthusiast placing an over-emphasis on faith and poverty. He was not an ascetic, seeking deprivation for its own sake and offering that to God as worship. He called such a thing "will worship": carnal religion. What he did was a deliberate witness in his life to the truth which he taught. He said that all the things he mentioned were a part of his ministry. It would be thought that the missionary should be protected from many of the things he mentions—necessities, hunger and thirst, poverty, possessing nothing. Yet he lists them as part of his ministry—part of his testimony to the sufficiency of the indwelling life of Christ.

That is what made it possible for him to write with authority to the Philippians, "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19). He preceded that statement with a personal testimony.

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to

be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:11-13).

He is writing to thank the church for a gift of money which they had sent him, but he is careful to make it clear that he is dependent upon God, not man. He never made known his material needs. He never even asked a church to pray that his financial needs might be met.

This testimony to having learned the secret of contentment and peace in Christ under all conditions, and his assurance that God would supply their needs, would have had little reality if the church had not known that he was continually proving it in his life. It would just have been pious talk.

When the church read Paul's words, no one could say, "It is easy for Paul to write that. He is well off; he has security and all he needs. He cannot understand the hard things we have to face in life". The testimony of his life, and of the lives of Timothy and the other missionaries, was well known to the churches. When Paul said, "My God", he spoke of the God whose power and faithfulness he had manifested in his own life. Therefore his statement had unquestionable authority.

Had he not lived by faith, had he been protected and had always a sufficient supply, had he made demands for self and received an adequate stipend from the churches or charged expenses and a good fee for preaching, had he always put up at comfortable hotels and lived a protected life, could he have given the testimony he gave? It is said today, "The missionary should be relieved from worry regarding material supply so that he can give his mind wholly to his ministry". Is that reasoning Scripturally and spiritually true?

There are a multitude of reasons that can be given for this modern way. Let us apply some of them to Paul. Would he not have been saved much unnecessary worry and concern if the churches had arranged to supply him regularly with adequate support? Could he not then have devoted more of his time and strength to the preaching of the Gospel and been able to accomplish more? Would he not have had time to prepare better sermons and write better and more spiritual letters? Was it right to expect a man of his ability, education and position in the Church to minister under the conditions that he had to face? Did it not lower his dignity before the world, and the Church's dignity, and prejudice his ministry? And if we ask these questions regarding the servant of the Lord, should we not ask them regarding the Lord Himself? It would have taken from

our Lord's ministry its very life. And it would have done so with Paul's also.

It would have taken from Paul himself the very experiences that led him into the deep and intimate knowledge of God and of his Lord and that kept him dependent upon God and strong. Had he been saved from the things which he suffered, how incalculable would have been the loss—to him and to the Church.

Did Paul worry because he had to live by faith? No, living in such dependence upon God was a deep joy and satisfaction to him. His faith was real. Did it handicap him in his ministry? No, it gave his ministry reality. The reasons for our modern way may seem plausible to human wisdom, but how poor the fruit has been compared to that which Paul obtained!

The Church's Need

In the churches today there is a desperate need for those who will "fill up that which is lacking of the sufferings of Christ" and give this practical witness to the truth He revealed. In the churches there is spiritual knowledge, but in great part it is theoretical—just beautiful doctrine. Actually, the Church has come to regard the theoretical holding of spiritual truth as correct and normal and the practical manifestation of its power as abnormal. Anyone who would say that its practical power must be the experience of every believer would be considered as extreme. If a church were really to act upon these truths and wait upon the Lord in prayer expecting to be guided by the Spirit, believing that the living, victorious Christ was really standing in their midst and that they must wait upon Him actually to build His Church as He has said, they would be regarded as fanatical. To practise what is believed about faith, prayer, the guidance of the Spirit, His manifestation through the believer, and the spiritual warfare, would be considered impractical and foolish.

This is due, in great part, to the lack of the practical witness in the lives of the Lord's servants. As a result the Church is impoverished spiritually. Truth has become the letter that killeth, not the Spirit that manifests life. The glorious reality of the victorious risen Christ manifesting His life in the believer is but a powerless theoretical dogma.

The difficulty is the cost of this witness. But today also it is possible to say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me". After all, it just means the denying of self, the taking up of the Cross as He said was essential to those who

would follow Him. But it means doing this not in beautiful theory but in costly reality.

In Paul's time there were few willing to do this, yet there were some—a small company whose hearts were set as was his and who could say with him,

"I count all things but loss, because all are nothing-worth in comparison with the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but as dung that I may gain Christ, that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, sharing the likeness of His death" (Phil. 3:8, 10, Conybeare).

They had nothing whatsoever of material resources or aids, but the Lord manifested His life gloriously through them, accomplishing a work away beyond their numbers.

Today also there may not be many willing to pay this price, yet there are those whose love to Him is such that they will gladly do so. And we can know that through them also His glorious life will be manifested, triumphant over every work of man or Satan.

A Calvary ministry requires a Calvary witness and a Calvary witness can only be given through continual Calvary experience—and that cannot be obtained in any path protected from suffering. The cost of such a witness can never be avoided or lowered.

The Shepherd gave His life for the sheep. Those who serve under Him must give no less. Let us remember that it is a ministry and a witness of perfect love. His was, and ours must be also. How can such a ministry be true if we avoid sacrifice; if self-love places limits to that which we are willing to give? Our self-love becomes the negation of our witness. Oh for those willing to take up the Cross and follow in the steps of the Master and commend themselves thus as faithful ministers of the Gospel!

CHAPTER XXI

PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

The question is often asked: Why is prayer not always answered? God's promise to answer prayer is definite and often repeated. We find, indeed, that it is basic in His dealings with His people. It has always been so; in every age, man's sincere cry to God has found ready and immediate response.

Every true child of God knows that God answers prayer and has often proved it so. But is it not true that sometimes, yea often, we have prayed for things and have not received them? This has not caused us to doubt God's Word or His faithfulness, but we have not understood it; we have wondered why there was no answer and what was wrong with our prayer.

Prayer occupies a vital place in the believer's life and service. Our spiritual progress and the effectiveness of our testimony depend upon the extent to which we know and enter into our prayer privileges. Through prayer we enter into spiritual communion with God. It takes us out of the realm of the material, bringing us into definite relationship with that which is spiritual and eternal. By prayer we enter the spiritual realm and are brought into contact with God personally through the Spirit. In prayer we speak to God through the Spirit and God speaks to us through the Spirit.

In all spiritual truths revealed in the Word, we must beware of building a theory, consciously or unconsciously, upon an isolated statement or text. The full and exact meaning of a text may not be evident until it is compared with all other passages of Scripture dealing with the same subject. This never lessens the importance or power of any text; it makes the truth which it teaches deeper and vaster and more glorious.

This is so in the teaching of Scripture regarding prayer. The more we come to know of what is taught regarding the meaning, the power and the ministry of prayer, the more we will marvel and rejoice at the privilege God has given to us.

The Power of the Name

In considering the question of God's answers to prayer, we should understand clearly all the conditions which Scripture lays down for effectual prayer.

In the first place, prayer must be in the Name of Christ. Do we realize the full significance of that condition? When we

SOULISH PRAYER

INFLUENCED BY:

- (1) The Heart—what we love or do not like.
- (2) The Mind—what we think wise, best, important, necessary.
- (3) The Will—what we want or do not want.

Such prayer is not true prayer. It is not in accordance with God's wisdom and will. It will not be heard or answered.

PRAYER IN THE SPIRIT

IN THIS:

- (1) The Heart gives perfect love to God and likes what He likes.
- (2) The Mind is given revelation through the Word and the Spirit to know the mind of Christ.
- (3) The Will is yielded to God and wills to do His will.

This prayer will be offered by one who is walking with the Lord. It will be in accordance with His will and will be answered.

present a check at the bank, it is the name signed on the check that is accepted and ensures payment. We have been given the privilege of presenting our petitions to God in Christ's Name. It is His Name that is honoured. It is He who has that which we need and it is He who gives it to us. But what is the power of His Name and what gives us the privilege of using that Name?

The power in the Name is the power of Him who upholds "all things by the word of His power" (Heb. 1:2), whose power is infinite and absolute from all eternity to all eternity. It is supreme power, superior to all other power, whether of man, nature or Satan. That which gives us the privilege of using His Name is our identification with Him. We are identified with Him in His life. We are "quickened together with Him". As the branch receives life from the vine, so we live in Him. We have been made one with Him as He is one with the Father (John 17:21-23).

We are identified with Him as He is seated in heavenly places, "at the right hand of the majesty on high", "high above all other government and authority and power and dominion, and every title of sovereignty used either in this age or in the age to come (Eph. 1:21, Weymouth). We are identified with Him in His absolute and eternal victory over sin, over death and over all Satan's power and work, and in Him, by faith, we are placed in the sphere of absolute and eternal power, authority and triumph, in which He is now "seated" (Eph. 2:6; Heb. 1:3). Not only are we there positionally by faith, but by faith we may, in Him, participate in and experience day by day and moment by moment that power and authority and triumph. We are fully identified with Him in His present triumph. We are also fully identified with Him in His future absolute and eternal dominion and glory.

Conditions Governing Use of the Name

Our right to the use of the Name is derived from nothing in us; it is entirely of Him and He makes it ours as He identifies us with Himself. There are, of course, certain conditions governing the privilege of using His Name. (1) We must be living in complete obedience and yieldedness to Him: "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (1 John 3:22). (2) Our identification with Christ in His life must be our present vital experience: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you"

(John 15:7). (3) We must know His will and our prayer must be in accordance with it: "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us" (1 John 5:14). (4) When we know God's will and know we are asking according to His will, we must believe that He is both willing and able to do all that is asked: "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord" (James 1:6, 7).

The Spirit's Work

(5) There is another condition governing true prayer: it must be "in the Spirit"; "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. 6:18); "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude 20); "In the same way the Spirit also helps us in our weakness; for we do not know what prayers to offer nor in what way to offer them. But the Spirit Himself pleads for us in yearnings that can find no words, and the Searcher of hearts knows what the Spirit's meaning is because His intercessions for God's people are in harmony with God's will" (Rom. 8:26, 27, Weymouth).

How do you enter the presence of the Lord in prayer and what are the petitions you ask of Him? Do you ask according to your own thought? God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth. Do you ask according to your will? To be answered, our prayer must be according to His will. When you kneel, in prayer, do you look to your own desires and judgment and intelligence to guide you as to what to ask? Such prayer has no promise of an answer.

Only the Spirit knows the mind of God and can pray in accordance with His infinite wisdom and eternal purpose. We know not what things to ask. The natural mind and human wisdom cannot know except as they are revealed by the Spirit.

How often have we sought from the Lord in prayer the things we have thought we needed, that we considered would be best for us! How often have we taken to the Lord our plans for His work, what we judged was good, or necessary, or urgent, or indispensable! And when we have taken to Him our wisdom (which is foolishness) and our plans (which are but hindrances to the working out of His infinitely more glorious plan) how patient and loving He has been with us! Yet, we have wondered

why the answer did not come, the power was not manifested, the blessing not vouchsafed. How long, in consequence, have we struggled along on the plane of our own thought and plan, working in our own strength that fruit might be produced!

True Prayer

Do you know what it is to pray in the Spirit? We do not refer to anything ecstatic. The Holy Spirit is not visible to the natural eye nor is His voice audible to the natural ear. It is expressly stated that the "groanings" of the Spirit in prayer are humanly unutterable. Do you know what it is to receive inward conviction and urge and revelation and absolute assurance when in prayer, knowing that what you pray is of the Spirit and not of yourself? Do you approach the Lord in absolute yieldedness in prayer seeking only that the Spirit will illumine your mind and pray through you? When we do so in faith, taking as ours God's promise, we shall certainly and immediately experience the truth of His Word.

Prayer in the Spirit requires absolute surrender. If there is anything whatsoever that is consciously unyielded to the Lord, the only word the Holy Spirit will have for us will be concerning that sin. But all that we require to enter into our privileges in prayer is to approach God in Christ's name in full surrender and humble faith.

How may we enter into such a prayer experience? Several years ago in the Homelands, we had occasion to visit a professional man who was also a servant of the Lord. The conversation turned to prayer. We spoke of being led of the Spirit in prayer, of how one may know if there is freedom of Spirit to pray for a certain thing or not, of how one can definitely be conscious that there is no liberty to ask what we had perhaps thought to ask or what we even thought was essential for the welfare of God's work. We spoke of how one may be led definitely of the Spirit to pray instead for things we had not thought of and that, perhaps, seemed impossible or impracticable. We talked of the prayer warfare against Satan's work and its relation to the victory of the Cross, and of how the Holy Spirit will reveal where and when we should stand against the power of Satan, and how He will lead us on in prayer from day to day and week to week and month to month, causing us to go forward step by step, at times standing still, as it were, claiming the victory while God is preparing the way for the next step, being led through to victory at one point, then, when that has been dealt with, having

liberty to go on to another, and so advancing, pressing the battle, in the Spirit, against Satan's usurping dominion until stronghold after stronghold is reduced. We considered our victorious position in Christ and our privilege to stand by faith at all times in His victory.

As we were leaving, our friend said, "I suppose it will take some time to learn to pray in that way". We assured him that it was not so; that one has only to kneel in true yieldedness and faith, trusting God to put all that is of the flesh, of self, of the natural mind, on the Cross and that then the Holy Spirit will do that which He is waiting to do. Several days later we visited this friend again. He said to us, "My prayer life is completely changed. Now I know what it is to pray in the Spirit".

Serving through Prayer

There are many sides to a prayer ministry. There is confession as the Holy Spirit reveals and convicts of sin. There is petition as He causes us to know that which we should ask. There is praise as we glorify Him and rejoice in Him. There is inquiry as we seek to know God's will and listen for the voice of the Spirit. There is communion as we receive strength and comfort from God. There is intercession as when our Lord prayed for Peter, and a ministry for others such as Paul continually exercised on behalf of the churches. There is conflict as, in faith in the finished work and eternal triumph of Christ, we stand on God's Word claiming the defeat of every device of Satan and the overthrow of his 'strongholds'.

Let us be mindful of our Lord's example. Prayer was basic in His life and ministry. How often was He in the mountain alone or in the desert place apart! Let us not forget His many hours of prayer before He chose His disciples (Luke 6:12), before He announced His coming death (Luke 9:18), and in all the important steps of His ministry on earth. He won the victory first in prayer. And let us not forget the lesson of Gethsemane. Our Lord said to His disciples: "Pray that ye enter not into temptation". But they were tired and slept. He agonized in prayer. The temptation came and the disciples went out of the Garden in defeat. They fled; Peter denied his Lord. But Christ went out of the Garden in the strength of God to the Cross and to eternal victory over all Satan's power.

Instruments of God's Purpose

Our prayer ministry must be related definitely to the carrying

out of God's purposes in Christ. We know that He is working now, and has been working since "before the foundation of the world", in accordance with a fore-ordained plan. At no time in the history of God's dealings with men has His purpose been changed or modified to conform to the circumstances of the moment. God's plan is based upon absolute foreknowledge as well as perfect wisdom and it is not subject to changing circumstances. Nor is there any possibility that any detail of it will not be fulfilled. Until now everything has happened as God's Word has foretold and that which still remains to be done will be accomplished "in the fulness of time".

Today God is working out that part of His purpose which relates to this time, bringing to fulfilment all that He has ordained concerning Christ and the Church. In this dispensation, we, as members of the Church, the Body of Christ, are the instruments He would use. It follows that all our service, if it is to be true service, must be related to that Divine purpose. Anything that is done by the Holy Spirit through the believer will be a part of it. Likewise anything that is done by the believer in his own wisdom and strength will have no true relation to it and will contribute nothing to its fulfilment.

In view of this truth, how much is there in the Church today that is of man's building, not of God's purpose. Yea, and how much is there in our own individual service for the Lord that is really just our own thought and plan and effort and not Christ carrying on God's purpose through us by the Holy Spirit.

In John 14:12, our Lord makes known His identification with us in His work on earth: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto My Father". He told His disciples that He would be so one with them that He would work through them so that their work would be His work wrought through them. But He follows that statement with an explanation of how this intimate co-operation in ministry is to be effected: "And whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My Name, I will do it" (Jn. 14:13, 14). He will do the work through us when we ask it of Him in prayer. That gives the prayer of faith, that is according to God's will, an essential place in the carrying out of God's purposes through us.

The order of procedure in participating in the work of the Lord is as follows:

- (a) The believer walking in obedience to Him and "praying

always in the Spirit" is caused by the Spirit to know the Lord's will.

(b) He asks that of the Lord, in prayer, in faith, doubting nothing.

(c) Then the Lord does it in answer to prayer, accomplishing His work through His people (Cf. Jn. 15:4, 7, 16; 17:16).

The Church's Prayer

The same order is found in our Lord's teaching regarding the prayer of the local church in Matthew 18:15-20. In verse twenty, we have the fundamental fact of His presence in every gathering of members of His Body: "for where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them".

In every meeting of the Body the Head is present. And the Head is present not as a spectator but to direct and to control. In the previous verse (19) these members of the Body are seen together in prayer: "Again I say unto you, that if two of you (the smallest possible congregation) shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven".

In the congregation's prayer, unanimity is necessary. Those who meet in prayer should be of one mind. This does not mean that they agree together to ask a certain thing. When all know the Lord's mind all will be of one mind. Corporate prayer is subject to the same conditions as private prayer. Those who pray must be walking in obedience and God's will must be known. They agree as those met to pray at Pentecost were agreed. They all know the will of the Lord revealed to them by the Spirit and, therefore, ask unitedly "according to His will". Christ, the Head, who is present, is directing and controlling the Body and working through it.

As the Church prays in accordance with the will of the Head there is the absolute promise that her prayer will be answered. It is upon this that the authority that is given to the Church in the preceding verse (18) is based. The Lord, the Head of the Body, gives no arbitrary authority to the Church. It is not the will of the Church, right or wrong, that is bound or loosed in Heaven, but the will of the Head revealed to the Church by His Spirit through the Word and asked of God in believing prayer.

This is the true basis and order of all the acts and work of the Church. Prayer "in the Spirit" and "according to the will of God" and prayed in the Name of the Head, whose will it is, is the vehicle of all the Church's power and authority. This power

and authority is limited only by His will. When the prayer is according to His will, there is the Lord's own promise and the absolute certainty that He will do what is asked.

Prayer had its true place in the Church of the New Testament. The Church was born in a prayer meeting. From that first prayer gathering, at which the Holy Spirit came to abide in the Church, the Church went forward in prayer, praying in the Spirit (Acts 2:42). It was as they continued in prayer at Antioch that the Holy Spirit revealed His will to send forth Barnabas and Paul to the work "whereunto I have called them".

The appointment of Elders in the churches was after fasting and prayer. When persecution broke out, the Church got to prayer. We read of Peter receiving the guidance of the Lord while in prayer, of Paul's continuous prayer ministry for the churches, of Epaphras' faithful wrestling in prayer. The Church's leaders were constant in prayer and continually urged the churches to be faithful in prayer. And so it was possible for the Lord, the Head of the Body, who was present in the midst in every gathering, to carry on His work in and through His Body. And there is the reason for the mighty wisdom, the irresistible power and the glorious conquests of the New Testament Church.

In the Church today this ministry of prayer, so essential to its work, is not practised. For this reason it is man's wisdom and will, to a very great extent, that builds and guides the Church. Can we wonder then that the "gates (counsels) of hell" are prevailing?

CHAPTER XXII

THE BELIEVER'S AUTHORITY IN CHRIST

A servant of the Lord was called upon to minister help in a situation that was hopeless beyond all human recourse. Driven to God in desperation, His servant boldly claimed in prayer the fulfilment of certain promises that had a direct bearing upon the case. God answered, fulfilled His promises, the seemingly impossible was done, Satan was rebuked, lives were saved from disaster and God's name was glorified.

Does the believer have authority to claim from God the thing which he asks of Him in prayer? May he take the position of definitely resisting Satan by faith? God's Word says that he not only may but should do both of these. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith" (1 Pet. 5:8). "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

However, we should know the ground upon which this privilege is given and the conditions that govern it, that we fall not into the sin of presumption.

In the first place, we must realize that the authority is not ours but Christ's. It is only when we truly speak or pray in His Name, expressing His will, that our words have His authority behind them. We are given no right to demand what we wish or think should be. The promise is only to those who ask according to His will.

The authority which our Lord possesses is generally recognized, at least theoretically, by spiritual believers. He is "Lord of lords and King of kings"; He is seated "at the right hand of the Majesty on high"; all things have been put under His feet (Heb. 1:3; Eph. 1:21, 22; 1 Pet. 3:22). While He was on earth He gave us a glimpse of His authority when sickness, the wind and waves, demons, and death itself obeyed His command. The authority of the risen Lord is absolute beyond the comprehension of our finite mind.

We, the members of the Church, are seated in Christ, the Head of the Church, in heavenly places (Eph. 1:19-23; 2:6). "In Him" we participate in all His wisdom, power and authority. But let us understand that this participation is only "in Him". The victory is His, not ours; won by Him, not by us. In us there is no wisdom, power or authority.

The Lord said, "I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it". Satan has no right to prevail. It is contrary to the Lord's purpose that he do so. To no small extent he is prevailing in the Church today and in many of God's people, but the reason is that God's people are permitting him to do so, even opening the way for him.

Christ is not in defeat; He is absolute Victor. It is necessary to the carrying out of the Lord's purposes that Satan still be permitted a certain degree of liberty, but he cannot do more than Christ permits him to do—or than we permit him to do through lack of faith or obedience.

Though we assent to the doctrine of God's omnipotence, we are very apt to feel helpless when we see the evidence of Satan's power. That attitude is unbelief and inevitably bears the fruit of unbelief. In the conflict against Satan, we shall accomplish nothing if we doubt God's power to fulfil His Word and carry out His will.

When we know what God's will is, it is certain that Satan will challenge us to the utmost of his power. He will seek to turn us aside by every kind of argument and to discourage and frighten us that our faith may fail. God permits Satan to test us for our good, but it is not His will that we settle down to accept as inevitable a condition of partial defeat. Patience and longsuffering are true Christian virtues, possible only through the indwelling grace of the Lord, but to bow our heads meekly to endure the triumph of Satan, through unbelief or spiritual inertia, is not Christian patience and longsuffering. Paul showed much patience and longsuffering in the face of Satan's fierce and continual efforts to prevent God's purpose being carried out through him; but he never accepted defeat.

"Command Ye Me"

When we know God's will, it is necessary that we have faith that it be carried out through us. God said to His people, "Command ye Me concerning the work of Mine hands". He desires that we go to Him in the prayer of absolute faith asking that His will be done. If we are uncertain as to His faithfulness or power, then, "Let not that man think that he will receive anything of the Lord".

It is only concerning the work of His hands that we are to command Him—concerning that which He is doing; that which is His purpose, and which neither Satan nor man has a right to hinder. It is not concerning that which we consider we are doing

for Him, but only concerning that which He wills to do through us.

There are occasions—and they are very many—when we must definitely challenge Satan with God's Word and accept no compromise. We have the right to avail ourselves of Christ's power and authority over Satan. When Satan attacks we have the right to take our stand upon God's Word, claiming by faith that it shall be fulfilled and Satan's work completely overthrown. We have seen many a seemingly hopeless situation entirely changed when we have taken such a stand. Until we did so Satan pressed his attacks with confidence, but immediately we challenged him openly and definitely in the Name of Christ, the Victor of Calvary, his defeat and powerlessness became evident.

However, we would repeat again, we should realize clearly that no power is conferred upon us wherewith we are able to resist him. The Word of God is not a talisman or a magic formula that may be employed at will either to protect us from Satan's evil power or to make God do what we ask. God alone has power to subdue the arch-enemy. Let us not forget that the archangel Gabriel durst not bring a railing accusation against him but said, "The Lord rebuke thee" (Jude 8-10).

Satan cannot stand for one moment against God. Such is the power and authority of God that His Word alone is sufficient to reduce Satan to silence and to put him to flight. It was with the Word of God that Christ met him and before it Satan became speechless and powerless. Christ used God's Word with truth and with faith. He simply stated what God said, facing Satan with that which God had made known as His purpose.

Dangers in the Way

Two great dangers are that our faith may be weak so that we fail to seek the carrying out of God's full will, asking only a part, or that we mistake His will and lay claim to that which is not in His purpose. Let us be before Him for the faith that we need and that He needs to find in us. Also, let us be watchful that our wills be yielded: that we be always ready to have Him cause us to see that what we had thought was His will and had insisted upon was only our own thought. We have found this very necessary.

When Paul had the "thorn in the flesh" that he recognized as Satan's work he asked God to remove it. Paul had faith and he had a right to lay claim to Christ's victory over Satan. But God did not grant his request. Was God unfaithful to fulfil His

Word? No, the thorn in the flesh was necessary to the accomplishing of His purpose in Paul.

Paul had not asked according to God's will; but he had a yielded will, so when God caused him to see that there was a deeper principle involved in the matter than what he had first discerned, he thanked God and rejoiced that the thorn was permitted to remain.

If we are truly willing to know and to do God's will, He will lead us step by step with infinite patience until we do know it and then, when we seek that of Him in the prayer of faith, He will be faithful to bring it to pass. It is His will that we participate fully in Christ's power and triumph, first in our own hearts and lives, and then in that work of His hands which He would carry out through us.

CHAPTER XXIII

PRINCIPLES OF GUIDANCE

The fact that direct guidance is given by God to His people has been fundamental in all His dealings with men. It is emphasized and illustrated throughout all Scripture. Before the Fall, man walked in obedience to the directing wisdom of his Creator and in full communion with Him. At the Fall he chose to take his own way independent of Divine control and guidance. Since then he has considered himself sufficient in himself, lord of his own life, having no need of guidance and wisdom from God except, perhaps, when he finds himself in some special trouble, and then only to get him out of that trouble.

In the Old Testament, God is seeking a people for Himself: a people that would walk in the way He would show them and we behold His infinite love and patience towards those whom He would guide but who continually spurn His guidance, reject His control and walk in the way of their own choosing.

Christ came to do the will of God. In the New Testament we have the Church, the Body of Christ, in which He, filling each member with His fulness, would carry on His work of fulfilling the Father's will. Every member of the Body, therefore, must know the will of God at all times and walk in full obedience to it.

Paul's prayer for the Colossians was: "That ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might according to His glorious power . . ." (Col. 1:9-11).

We ought to be filled with the knowledge of His will. Then only we shall have wisdom and spiritual understanding. Then only can we walk worthy of the Lord and be pleasing to Him. Then only can we be fruitful in the bearing of spiritual fruit, enter deeper into the knowledge of Him, be strengthened with His all-victorious might and experience His glorious power.

Thus we see that guidance—a knowledge of God's will—is not to be regarded as a special privilege for a chosen few but as an essential fundamental of every believer's life and service. Nor is it necessary only on special occasions, when the believer may be called to a particular work or confronted with an unusual dif-

ficulty. There should be the consciousness always of knowing that we are in God's will.

Insufficiency of Man's Wisdom

An attitude commonly taken is, "God has given me intelligence and intends me to use it, so if I go forward doing the best I can I do not require special guidance except when a special need for it arises". It is true, of course, that God has given us intelligence and intends that we use it. Nowhere in the Word is it suggested that we should be automatons with no will or intelligence of our own, blindly surrendered to the control of an outside power. Such a condition savours of spiritism. Our freedom—yea, and our responsibility—to will and to judge is never taken away from us. The danger lies in the manner in which our will and judgment are exercised.

The Word states the fact that "... the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). It also states God's provision for man: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Ps. 32:8). Regarding His people in the wilderness, it is recorded: "the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way: neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way wherein they should go. Thou gavest them thy good Spirit to instruct them" (Neh. 9:19, 20).

The response of every true servant of the Lord in this matter is always: "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence" (Ex. 33:15). And the testimony of all who have accepted God's guidance is: "He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye... So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him" (Deut. 32:10, 12).

In the world today, man considers his own wisdom as sufficient. Even in the Church of today there is a similar situation, the outcome of identical causes. The independence of man's will and judgment may not be declared, but it is definitely practised. He plans his service for God in his own wisdom. He declares his acceptance of God's Word as his guide, but finds it necessary to improve upon it, setting aside that which he decides is not practical or not suitable for the modern, civilized and intelligent man, and adding whatever modifications he judges to be wiser and better.

Nor do we have to go to the unorthodox to find this. Even the sincerest believer, if he allows the Holy Spirit to show him his

own heart, will have to confess that "the natural mind is enmity against God" and unwilling to submit to the Divine wisdom. He must use his judgment, but he must be exceedingly careful that it is properly related to the Divine judgment.

Knowing God's Will

How is God's will known? How is the guidance of the Holy Spirit received? Not a few of God's people in these days, among them many young people, are sincerely desirous of having an answer to these questions.

The God-directed life is at once easy and impossible—just as is any other spiritual experience. It depends upon surrender and faith. It is impossible to man's effort but easy to faith. A Holy Spirit-directed life is easy when the conditions are met. The fulfilling of the conditions, however, is not easy. It means the Cross applied to all that is of self. If we are not truly and absolutely willing for God's will in our lives, the Holy Spirit will not be able to guide us. It matters not how we excuse our unwillingness, or how insignificant or reasonable we make it appear to be, the result is the same. If our Lord had not been wholly willing could the Father's will have been carried out through Him?

God's Word is, of course, the principal source of guidance. All guidance that we receive must be checked carefully by God's Word. Never will the Holy Spirit guide contrary to it. Therefore, we must know God's Word.

Prayer directed by the Holy Spirit is important as a means of obtaining guidance from the Holy Spirit. Where there is no true "praying in the Spirit" there cannot be any continued experience of guidance by the Holy Spirit—except as the Lord in His faithfulness seeks to deal with us to lead us nearer to Himself. It is necessary to be in continual touch with the Lord through prayer, sometimes waiting before Him, at other times just lifting the heart to Him for a moment wherever we may be to make sure of His will.

Guidance and circumstances naturally will be related often to each other. Circumstances call for guidance and they may be used of God to direct us to His will. But, unless there is the accompanying, definite assurance in prayer regarding God's will, our course should not be shaped by circumstances. Even the vision of the man of Macedonia given to Paul would have been nothing more than a vision had there not followed the strong

assurance given to all in the party that it was the indication of God's will (Acts 16:9, 10).

That instance of guidance in Paul's case is interesting in that it shows the confirmation given by the Holy Spirit to all. The same principle is evident in the confirmation of Paul's call given to the brethren in Antioch. In all cases, where God's work is involved, we should seek the confirmation in prayer of our fellow-workers. Often, also, in personal matters, such confirmation is of the greatest value. It is a safeguard that can prevent mistakes.

Some Dangers

No doubt we all know instances of believers who, while claiming to be guided by the Holy Spirit, have done extravagant things that were evidently contrary to God's will and to His Word. Some of them are misled by the impulses of their own inclinations, taking them as the Holy Spirit's guidance. Knowing that it is possible, yea easy, to fall into such error, it behoves us to exercise the greatest care, seeking confirmation from such as know how to get God's guidance in prayer. When we receive such confirmation, it gives us greater assurance that we are in the Lord's will and strengthens our faith.

We must be watchful not only of the soulish mind but also of the soulish heart. The heart is deceitful above all things. It is only as we love the Lord with the whole heart that we shall be willing to do His will. And it is only then that we shall have the full confidence in Him that will enable us to go forward without fear in whatever path He shows us. We must beware of our emotions; of any spirit of hurry, impatience, fear or enthusiasm. When serious danger seems to threaten and the Holy Spirit gives us no guidance to do anything, we are strongly tempted to act as we think is necessary. We fear to do nothing and to leave the matter in God's hands.

In our own experience, we have always found that by obeying at such times we have been protected from the danger. The storm has passed without hurting us. Had we done what seemed so necessary, we would have complicated the situation, increasing the danger and greatly hindering the Lord in His working.

We can easily be deceived by enthusiasm. What seems to be a great opportunity or a perfect plan may rouse enthusiasm that we mistake for the guidance of the Spirit. We have found it wise not to hurry at such times, but to keep waiting on the Lord to make sure. Not infrequently we have found, after a time, when

the first enthusiasm has passed, that it was not of the Lord and just a dream of the soul.

Guidance for the Church

Guidance is not only for the individual, it is also for the Church and for any company of the Lord's people ministering together. In the New Testament we find the churches guided by the Holy Spirit in all that they did. They waited in prayer before the Lord with fasting to know His will. As we have seen, it was so when the Holy Spirit spoke to the church in Antioch confirming the going forth of Barnabas and Paul. When elders were to be appointed in the new congregations we find these churches also praying and fasting to know the Lord's choice. In that way, Christ, who is present in every true meeting of His Church, was able to guide it. How much the Church is losing today through failing to seek the will of the Lord who is present in the midst! The Head of the Church is ignored because there is not the time—or more truly, not the willingness—to wait upon Him to know His will. So man builds the Church.

There are teachings regarding guidance today that are contrary to God's will and extremely dangerous. Leaving the mind a blank and taking the first thought or impulse that comes to us as guidance from the Holy Spirit, is simply leaving ourselves open to deception by evil spirits. On the other hand, to hold a gathering for the discussion of the *pros* and *cons* of a situation, deciding by majority vote what is the best and wisest course to follow, and then ask that God will bless as we do it, is simply to direct our own way and ask God to bless our decisions. It is presumption. It is the way of man's wisdom and as we walk in it we deprive ourselves of our privilege of being guided by the infinitely superior wisdom of God, placing our walk and service, instead, on the level of our own intelligence.

Guidance is by "a still small voice", not by ecstatic experience or spectacular revelations. Usually, the voice of the Spirit of God is so gentle that we can hear it only as we walk close to the Lord. But it can be drowned by the noises within our heart and mind. There must be "quietness and confidence". Fear, doubt, complaining, our own demands and many other things can create so much noise that we cannot hear and so think that the Lord is not speaking. But it is a voice that may be heard at all times, if we are listening, no matter where we are or what we are doing. It is our privilege to look to Him at any moment, anywhere, to know if we are in His will, seeking that quiet sense of assurance,

that absence of any feeling of check in the Spirit, which enables us to go forward with confidence, knowing that, as we are in His will, all His Word concerning us will be fulfilled.

God may use many different means to indicate His will to us, but at all times and with all His children, the quiet inner voice of the Spirit communicating assurance or lack of it is ever the same and always essential.

A Purpose for Each One

This walk in the center of God's will may be in the home, or the office, or the workshop just as really as in the seeking of souls or the preaching of the Word. All we need to know at any moment is that we are in His will at that moment. If we know that, we know it is what will glorify Him most.

In seeking the guidance of the Lord, it is well to remember that not only is He concerned with the work He would carry out through us, but also He is engaged in teaching and preparing us, making us ready for that which He would do through us and seeking to keep us in the place where He can use us. This often is the reason for guidance that tests our absolute obedience and faith. Oftentimes, obedience is hard when we are caused to wait until His time has come and He has prepared us and prepared the way. He must teach us to wait patiently for His time with absolute confidence in His wisdom and love.

A word of warning is necessary in this connection. There may be the mistake of waiting for a special vision daily for the doing of something we already know to be His will for us. This may lead to an inactivity and introspection that brings spiritual stagnation. When God's will is known we should go forward in the doing of it. Of course, we must not go forward to do it in our own wisdom and strength, doing God's will for Him. He must do it through us and we must know His will for every step. However it is not the repetition of the command that is needed but the direction of the Spirit as to how we should act as we go forward.

A clear illustration of this is given in Acts 16:6-10. Paul and his companions had been called to go, so they went, but as they went they were careful to make sure, every step of the way, that they were in God's will. They were always sensitive to any check by the Holy Spirit, and He did check them when they would have gone out of His will, but so long as there was assurance of being in God's will they went forward.

The Lord has a purpose for His Church and for each one of His

children. The Holy Spirit is in each one to lead according to that purpose. We may enter into it and be led on into all that is His will for us. On the other hand, we may stumble along with much that is of our own wisdom and strength in our life and service, failing, in large measure, to enter into God's perfect will, to produce the true spiritual fruit and to experience the fulness of His enabling power. It is not difficult to get true guidance. The Holy Spirit is present in every believer, every moment, waiting to give it. He is with us to communicate wisdom, strength and guidance, and will do so as our hearts are truly open to Him.

CHAPTER XXIV

OUR PLACE OF SERVICE

What is His place for me and to what ministry has He called me? All earnest Christians at one time or another are faced with these questions. Some consider them seriously; others brush them aside. Many fail to reach a satisfactory conclusion regarding them and to know with certainty God's will for their lives.

The advice given at consecration meetings and missionary meetings is not always helpful. To often, it is rather a sentimental and emotional appeal to zeal than a Scriptural presentation of the Lord's claim upon our lives and service. In considering this matter, there are certain fundamental factors that should be borne in mind, for they must form the basis of any quest for a knowledge of God's will for one's life.

In the first place, God has a purpose, a ministry and a place for every child of His. That being so, He will be faithful to reveal it to each one. His purpose for us is not just a general, inclusive purpose covering all except a special few who are chosen for higher tasks. It is not sufficient to say: I have been saved to serve: therefore I must seek to witness for Him in some way. God has a particular purpose for each one, a detailed plan for each life. The concern of each one, therefore, must be to come to a definite knowledge of the ministry and place to which He has called.

In the second place, while God has a special purpose for each individual, it is not an unrelated purpose: we are not detached units, each one being used of God independently of the others. God is working through individuals, but He is using them as members of the Church, the Body of Christ. His purpose for the Church is that Christ should be manifested through it in His fulness and what He does through each member will always be a part of the carrying out of that purpose. All must take part in this. The work done through each member is related to that done through all the other members so that the whole may be one complete work, one perfect testimony.

This is made beautifully clear in the twelfth chapter of I Corinthians, where Paul describes the Church as a body composed of many members, each one set in place by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit; every member equally essential to the full accomplishment of the work of the Body, and each one with grace-gifts, or manifestations of the Spirit, for the

benefit of all. The Church spoken of is not one of our present-day organizations, but the whole body of true believers: all those who have been united to Him by faith and baptized into one body by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13).

It follows that not only has God a place and a ministry for me but He has a fellowship for me with other members of the Body brought together by the Holy Spirit for the doing of His work, and the gift which the Holy Spirit has given me is to be coordinated with the gifts they have received and is equally necessary with theirs to the full carrying out of the work which God would do through that company of people in that place.

In the third place, it is God who chooses our sphere of service and ministry for us; the choice does not lie with us. It is explicitly stated that "now hath God set the members, every one of them in the Body as it hath pleased Him" (1 Cor. 12:18). Also, speaking of the spiritual gifts by which the work of the Body is carried out, it is taught that "all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit dividing to every man severally as He will" (1 Cor. 12:11).

In Paul we see an example of this. As soon as he had a vision of Christ and surrendered to Him, he said what every convert should say, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). Then his Lord said to him, "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness..." Christ's purpose for him was not just his salvation but to make him an instrument in the carrying out of His work and He began immediately to prepare him for it.

In the fourth place, it is God who gives the necessary spiritual equipment. According to the place which He has chosen for us, the Spirit will manifest through us the corresponding grace-gifts. This means that the taking of some course of study is not in itself a sufficient preparation or qualification. It is essential to study God's Word, but that knowledge will not take the place of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit's gifts. So whatever the Lord has called us to we can expect to see the increasing evidence of the Holy Spirit's enablement for that service.

The Field is the World

There is another point which needs to be taken into consideration if our thinking on this matter is to be clear. The dividing of the world into home and foreign fields has no Scriptural basis. The command to go into all the world and preach the Gospel did not exclude what we now term the homelands. It included them, and still does. The field is one, and it

is the whole world. To make the missionary command apply only to what we call the foreign field is to limit its intended scope and introduce a false distinction into our thinking which leads to judgments that are seriously untrue.

Taking into account these basic, Scriptural principles, let us consider some statements made frequently and in all sincerity in seeking to press the claims of the foreign field upon young people.

"The need is the call", it is often urged. That is true only in a general sense. But just as the field is the whole world, including the homelands, so the need is everywhere—in the homelands as well. The proportion of the need varies in different parts of the field. It is easy to demonstrate that the need is greater in some countries than in others. However, the need of Africa or India or China is not the call to one whom the Lord would have in South America. Likewise, the need of South America is not God's call to some one who has been called by Him to serve in North America or Britain. The need is certainly an important factor in every call, but it is not the deciding factor. The deciding factor is God's call. The place God has chosen for me is the place to which I am called. So far as the need elsewhere is concerned, we must pray the Lord of the Harvest to thrust forth labourers, and, if we are all in surrender and obedience to be led and used anywhere and in whatever way He will choose, He, in His wisdom, will meet the need everywhere. Of course the real difficulty is that many are not in surrender and do not know the place of God's choice.

Another statement that is frequently heard is to the effect that all are called to go, therefore a special call is needed for those who would stay. Here again it is assumed wrongly that the homelands are excluded from the missionary command. Not only so, but this statement is contrary to the practice of the New Testament Church as seen in the choosing of Barnabas and Saul from among the five ministering to the Church in Antioch and the confirming of their call to the Church by the Holy Spirit. The special call was given, not to those who remained at home, but to those who were sent forth to the work of establishing the Church in other lands.

We must beware lest a truly God-given burden for the great need in many parts of the world-field should lead us to make appeals based upon sentimental grounds and not upon God's Word, directed merely to the spiritual zeal of the earnest young Christian, without making sure that there is the necessary accom-

paniment of a knowledge of God's order. Such appeals do not help forward the work of the Holy Spirit in leading forth those whom He has truly called. On the contrary, they have the exceedingly dangerous effect of causing young people to base a supposed call upon sentimental grounds instead of upon a true leading of the Holy Spirit and a definite knowledge of God's will.

This is no imaginary danger. The number of those who have gone out to the foreign mission field without a true call from the Holy Spirit is greater, perhaps, than is generally realized. The percentage of failures in most Missions is strangely high—generally about forty percent. These failures often are disasters, sometimes causing harm to God's work and keen suffering to those who have been misled. Over a period of twenty years we have sought to make very certain of the call of each candidate. The result has been the reduction of the percentage of losses from thirty-five percent to almost none. Those who advise young people have a great responsibility and should take these facts seriously into consideration.

It is true, of course, that there are many in the homelands whose God-chosen place is elsewhere. And these are, perhaps, not all in obscure places. It was the most experienced and seemingly most indispensable teachers of the Church in Antioch who were sent forth by the Holy Spirit to a wider ministry. In the New Testament order, all the leaders of the Church were missionaries.

In meeting young people in Bible Schools and Colleges and in dealing with missionary candidates, one has to face a serious lack of knowledge regarding the leading of the Holy Spirit, God's order for the Church, and the Scriptural principles that should be taken into account when we seek to know the place and ministry to which He has called.

True Ministry

One finds a strong tendency to regard full-time ministry, either at home or abroad, as a career to be chosen, prepared for and succeed in, rather than a ministry to which God must call, for which the Holy Spirit must equip and in which the only success is the accomplishing of the work to which God has called that He may be glorified.

There persists also the thought that to choose service in the foreign field is something more spiritual, more sacrificial, more meritorious, more heroic. If we consider it as a matter of choosing a career and view it on sentimental grounds, then such a thought may have some foundation. But if we judge it in the light of

God's order for the carrying on of the work of the Church, we find it to be directly contrary to Scripture.

If God's call for me is to take some seemingly humble part in the ministry of a local church in the homeland while working and testifying in some office or factory or home and I have received the corresponding grace-gifts of the Holy Spirit for such a ministry, then, while there, I am in the place He has chosen for me in the Body, the place of the highest possible service, the place of obedience and greatest effectiveness. Any other place for me would mean disobedience and failure to enter into His full will and purpose and to permit Him to carry out through me that part of His work which He, in His infinite wisdom, wishes to do through me.

We have seen many in such places in the homelands, just as spiritual, walking just as near to the Lord, sacrificing just as truly as any engaged in the most arduous pioneer missionary work in foreign fields and bearing true fruit. And their field was not restricted, for through prayer, faith and giving guided by the Holy Spirit they carried on an effectual ministry that knew no limitations of distance or effectiveness.

Every member of the Body of Christ ought to know God's place for him or her. To know this, there must be full surrender and absolute willingness to do anything and go anywhere in obedience to God's call. If every member of the Body were in his and her place, there would be no lack of witnesses in any foreign field or in any part of the homelands.

We have heard a young man say to us, "I have a gift for preaching and a training superior to that required for the foreign field, so I feel I ought to stay at home". Not infrequently, people in the homelands of whom we have enquired regarding some candidate, have admitted that they considered that "he would not be qualified for ministry at home but would be all right on the foreign mission field". Again, we have heard: "A young man of such ability should not throw away his prospects by burying himself in some foreign field".

Such statements reveal how serious is the lack of understanding among many Christian people regarding the qualifications which God requires for ministry and the manner in which He calls. It is due to this that there are so many young people—and older people as well—who have no definite knowledge of God's will for them.

How much we miss if we are not in the place that God has chosen for us and if we are not engaged in the ministry which

the Holy Spirit has desired to carry out through us! The loss is not ours alone. Those to whom we are not ministering are deprived of the blessing the Lord desired to give. Those with whom we should be co-operating are left with the extra burden we should be carrying. And the Lord is deprived of His inheritance in us.

CHAPTER XXV

THE WORK OF DEMONS

The activity of demons and their intervention in the affairs of men is far more general and decisive than most Christians realize. These spirit-beings are the fallen angels who participated in Satan's sin. They are under his rule and act as his agents and are designated by various titles in Scripture. They are "demons" (knowing-ones), "angels", "evil spirits" (evil spiritual beings), "unclean spirits", "seducing spirits", "principalities, powers, world-rulers of this darkness, spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places". "Doctrines inspired by demons" are spoken of. Idolatry is inspired and empowered by them (1 Cor. 10:19-21; 1 Tim. 4:1; Rev. 9:20). They incite men to rebellion against God (Rev. 16:14). They recognize Christ as absolute Lord and as the Son of God and flee when commanded to do so in His Name (Matt. 8:29; Luke 4:41; Mark 9:38).

Satan is the prince and god of this Cosmos and through the hosts of fallen spirit-beings who are subject to him he seeks to rule men. These hosts are organized. There are "Principalities and Powers and Sovereigns of this present darkness, the spirits of evil in the heavens" (Eph. 6:12, Conybeare). We are told that it is these that Christ triumphed over on the Cross, making "a show of them openly" (Col. 2:15). The witness to be borne by the Church is not only before men but also, "That now . . . the manifold wisdom of God might be made known to the Principalities and Powers in the heavens, according to His eternal purpose, which He wrought in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:10-12, Conybeare).

It will be noted that much is said about this in Ephesians, the Epistle in which the revelation concerning the Church as the Body of Christ is given. Christ, as Head of the Church, "which is the fulness (pleroma) of Him that filleth all in all", is seated at the right hand of God "far above all principality and power and might and dominion". And we, the members of the Church, are made to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:20-23; 2:6).

In God's Word not a little information is given regarding the spirit-beings that inhabit the "air" or the "heavens". But there is evidently much that is not made known. All that we need to know is revealed and we are warned not to seek to delve with our own wisdom beyond that which Scripture makes known.

Among unbelieving men the activity of Satan and his demons is very real and very evident. The worship of the heathen is inspired by them and offered to them, usually with the thought of appeasing them. The fakir and witch-doctor maintain contact with evil spirits and while much of what they do is mixed with chicanery, genuine evidence is afforded of the presence and work of demons.

In more civilized societies contact with demons is provided through spiritism, the planchette, the ouija board, fortune telling, clairvoyance, etc. Their activity is much in evidence. There are many "doctrines of devils" inspired directly by evil spirits. There are many "synagogues of Satan" in which his corruptions of the Gospel are taught. There are political systems and leaders inspired by master minds of Satan's kingdom.

The Believer's Safety

An unwise and exaggerated emphasis has been placed by some Bible teachers upon certain aspects of the activity of demons among believers. One of Satan's most successful ways of combating revealed truths is to get the soulish intelligence to exaggerate and distort them until their true meaning is obscured. By this means he not only deludes those thus deceived, but also, using their error as an argument, persuades many others that these truths are dangerous and that it is wisest to avoid them altogether.

Before going further in this matter, we want to emphasize the absolute safety of the true believer who is walking in obedience to Christ. We have been translated from the sphere of Satan's power and authority and placed in the sphere of God's power and authority. We are continually and adequately protected by God from Satan's power. More than that, not only have we armour to quench every fiery dart of the Wicked One but we have authority to resist him in the Name of Christ, and when we use that authority he will flee from us.

It is Satanic delusion that produces what is hardly less than a morbid fear of being possessed by an evil spirit. There are very definite limits set by God to what Satan may do to the believer. The limits of his power are made clear in the conflict which he waged against our Lord during the days of His ministry on earth. To the obedient believer, who is watching unto prayer, Satan can do nothing that will cause spiritual harm; nothing that will prevent the carrying out of God's purpose in the believer's life.

Anything that God permits him to do is for our spiritual good and is used of God for the accomplishment of His purpose.

The Believer's Danger

It is, however, just as serious an error to ignore or underrate Satan's activity and power. To the disobedient, careless or unwatchful believer there is very much that he can do. He and his demons are ever near, ever seeking whom they "may devour", never missing the slightest opportunity that the careless believer may give them.

Demon possession is, perhaps, the danger that first comes to mind when the activity of evil spirits is spoken of. In demon possession the evil spirit takes possession of the human body, controlling the soul powers, throwing them into confusion and using them as a medium to express, in different ways, the lawlessness and depravity of its own nature. This demon control may be manifested in a person continually or sporadically. It is a real danger and a believer may certainly become demon possessed; but this cannot happen unless he deliberately lays his body open to the entrance of an evil spirit by seeking contact with it. In no other circumstances will it occur.

Demon possession today follows the same pattern as is seen in the cases described in the Old and New Testaments. In the homelands as well as in foreign fields not a few cases continue to occur, although it is more common in some parts of the world than in others. One or more demons may have entered into a person. When challenged in the authority of the Name of Christ, they will reveal their identity and give their names. They will never admit that Christ has come in the flesh. They hate and fear the Word of God and the mention of His Name. When commanded to do so in the Name of Christ they will leave their victim. In some there is strong resistance against the command and continuance of prayer and faith is required on the part of God's servants, as in the case of the one the disciples failed to expel (Mark 9:18, 28, 29). A demon who has been expelled may return and re-enter the person he had controlled if he is permitted to do so and may take several other demons with him. Such a case is described by our Lord in Matt. 12:43-45. A demon may continue for a time to annoy one from whom he has been cast out, trying to regain admittance but will finally withdraw completely when a firm stand is taken.

It is significant that while demons fear the Name of God and the Word of God, they not only do not fear the crosses, images

and pictures of the Virgin and saints, candles and other symbols of the Roman Catholic Church, but may make use of them for their purposes. One Argentine Catholic woman who had been a worker in witchcraft before being saved, had been instructed by the demons to place a cross, with the word "anima" scratched on it, before a lighted candle when she wished to communicate with Satan. This is a common practice among those who deal in witchcraft. She also had a picture of the Virgin which she used in her incantations. With images of saints or the Virgin before them, such workers in witchcraft will address Satan, believing that demons enter into these objects. Such things have no power over Satan but are his tools. This is not surprising since the use of such objects in worship is forbidden by God.

Much more common than demon possession among Christians is what we might call partial demon control. This term covers a large variety of cases in which a partial control is obtained, for a period that may be long or short, over the heart and mind by an evil spirit. Partial demon control is the cause of very much more harm to God's people and God's work than demon possession.

No unredeemed man is free from Satanic influence. The soul man with his limitations in knowledge and power and his capacity and need for spiritual guidance naturally and inevitably becomes subject to Satanic influence once he has withdrawn himself from God's control. No matter how independent he may think he is in his thoughts and actions, he is subject to a definite control by the prince of this Cosmos. His life is touched at every point by the influence of Satan's world-system and his mind is subject at times to the direct suggestions of evil spirits, "knowing ones", with their darkened, subtle wisdom. His life is conformed to Satan's system. His walk is in accord with the principles governing Satan's world and is, therefore, in obedience to Satan and pleasing to him. Satan is his prince and god.

The believer, although he has full protection from Satan's power available to him, is not beyond the reach of his influence. Many and urgent warnings of this are given in Scripture, and we are not left "ignorant of his devices". That which is born of the Spirit in the believer cannot be touched by Satan, but the soul is the object of continual attack and it is possible for Satan to gain a partial and temporary ascendancy over it. Satan's power is directed against the believer because he belongs to Christ and serves Him. Naturally, he usually has no interest in attacking his own subjects, although sometimes evil spirits seem to take

a morbid delight in tormenting those they use and even in destroying them when done with them (Mark 9:22).

This is not so surprising as may at first appear. These demons are beings that fell into the same sin as Satan. Self-love is the basis of all their actions and it is only natural that self-love's character, in its crudest as well as its most subtle manifestations, should be seen in them. Although they may appear on occasion as angels of light, yet their mental corruption and moral depravity are also evident.

Control of the Mind

As self-love is the basis of their own character, their attack against man is aimed to create self-love in him and to take advantage of any self-love in his heart. The fact is that partial control of a believer's soul, that is, of his natural powers, by Satan can come only in one way: through the acceptance by that believer at some point of the Satanic principle of self-interest—the enthroning of self. This may happen in many different ways and usually Satan's purpose is so well dissimulated that the victim is unaware of his true intention. He obtains control through the mind, suggesting reasonings that are plausible and seem justifiable. The door is opened through the heart—through some manifestation of self-love: pride, ambition, fear, anger, hate, resentment, selfish affection, covetousness, vanity.

We have seen Peter recoiling from the vision of the Cross and saying, "Pity thyself, Lord". He revealed a condition of mind which was to have its ultimate fruit in the denial of his Lord. His words were Satan-inspired. Our Lord addressed His reply to Satan. Peter's mind was partially under the influence of Satan's philosophy. His advice was based upon the Satanic principle of self-love. He was looking from Satan's viewpoint and his conclusions agreed with Satan's thought. A mind and heart in such an attitude is open to the suggestions that the cunning enemy of souls knows well how to make. The veiling of the truth from the mind by soulish reasoning is one of the principal ways in which Satan works.

James writes of the fruit of Satan-inspired reasoning: "But if in your hearts you have bitter envy and rivalry, do not speak boastfully and falsely, in defiance of the truth. That is not the wisdom which comes down from above: it belongs to earth, to the unspiritual (Greek- soulish) nature, and to evil spirits. For where envy and rivalry are, there also are unrest and every vile deed. The wisdom from above is first of all pure, then peaceful,

courteous, compliant, full of compassion and kind actions, free from vacillation and from insincerity" (James 3:14-17, Weymouth).

It is not necessary to have a wide knowledge of conditions in churches and among believers today to realize how continually and persistently, and often how successfully, Satan seeks to get control of the mind by blinding it with the wisdom that is from beneath. The strife and divisions are caused by it. The false doctrines, carnal wisdom, soulish methods (methods based upon man's own powers and wisdom) and human organization are the fruit of it. How many churches are affected by it! How widespread is the damage that is wrought!

Ambition, pride and self-confidence in the heart open the door for some "knowing one" to control the mind, building up a system of mixed truth and soulish wisdom—and the leader or propagator of an unscriptural cult is formed. Ambition, pride, envy and hate in the heart open the door for another "knowing one", and division and strife is created, and the one whose mind is so controlled believes he has good reason for all that he does.

A mind influenced by an evil spirit will find justification for almost any wrong. This is why, when a Christian allows himself to come under such an influence, he may do things that even the world would condemn; he may show a bitterness and falseness that will astonish the ungodly. His mind will find reasons for ignoring or even openly and deliberately disobeying God's Word and claiming that he is serving God in so doing.

The Corinthian church gives a good illustration of all this. The minds of many were seduced by evil spirits, and while they were loud in their claims of religious zeal, their words were soulish and self-interest was the principle upon which they acted. They condoned sin, they fought among themselves, brother even going to law against brother, and they desecrated the Lord's Table with their carnality. But all these things their minds found reasons to justify. They even gloried in them.

Every believer knows by experience how these "knowing ones" can inject thoughts into the mind, evil thoughts, subtle arguments. Their activity is very real and constant. At the same time, the Holy Spirit manifests through us His "grace-gift" of discernment of spirits, causing us to distinguish between His voice and theirs, providing an adequate protection from every wile of Satan. But this protection is lost if the voice of the Spirit is quenched.

The Spiritual Warfare

The principles governing our warfare with evil spirits are given in the last chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. This Epistle, as we have seen, is the revelation which Paul had received concerning the Church as the Body of Christ, in which should be manifested "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ". Those who are the members of this Body of Christ formerly "walked according to the course of this world and obeyed the ruler of the powers of the air, even the spirit who is now working in the children of disobedience" (2:2, Conybeare). But now, having been raised up with Christ from the dead and seated with Him in the heavens, they are the instruments, through the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them, for manifesting God's manifold wisdom before the spiritual rulers of the heavens.

It is at the close of this revelation to the Church that the instruction is given regarding warfare with the spiritual foe—with Satan and his demons. It is stated that the warfare is not against men but against Satan and his hosts. It is essential to keep this fact clearly in mind and to recognize that every man in whom opposition is found is but the tool of evil spirit-beings who influence his heart and mind. Men, therefore, no matter what they may be used to do against God's work, must always be regarded as our Lord regards them, not as the enemy, but as the enemy's instruments—men for whom Christ died and whom He loves. The victory that we must seek is for them and in them, not over them. They must be delivered from Satan's deceptions.

The believer is counselled to put on all the armour provided by God, for only thus equipped can he enter this spiritual conflict and withstand the enemy. He is provided with armour that gives him absolute protection. The shield of faith will quench every fiery dart. The sword of the Spirit (the Word of God) is an effective weapon both for defence and offence. He is exhorted to "stand": to definitely take his stand against the enemy, refusing to move, to give ground, or to admit defeat at any point. Finally, he is warned to be watchful continually in Spirit-guided prayer.

Satan and his "knowing ones" are ever active, ever near, seeking any opportunity to gain an advantage. This requires constant watchfulness in the believer—a watchfulness for which his soulish wisdom and sagacity are not sufficient; he must watch continually through prayer in the Spirit. This watchfulness must be exercised not only in his own behalf but also in behalf of all believers. In this matter every member of the Body of Christ has

a duty and a responsibility towards every other member of the Body. Our Lord prayed for Peter when Satan had desired to have him. How great and how necessary a ministry this is. We may prevail by faith, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, discerning the purposes of Satan and standing against them in the Name of the Victor of Calvary, claiming the fulfilment of His Word.

Thus, what we see pictured in this last chapter of Ephesians is not a brave soldier, dressed in bright armour and brandishing his sword, but a humble, yielded believer upon his knees, "watching unto prayer", believing God's Word with an absolute faith, used and guided by the Holy Spirit in a conflict that is not with men but with evil spirits.

In all types of the activity of Satan and his demons the prayer of faith will prevail. Their work should not be accepted or endured. It must be refused and resisted in the authority of the Name of Christ. Very often it is because no definite stand of faith is taken against them that they are able to work and press the battle against God's people. We must have faith to exercise the authority given us by Christ.

The warfare is in the spiritual realm. It is the warfare between the two Thrones in the heavenlies and the believer engages in it as an instrument used by the Holy Spirit. He avails himself of his position as seated with Christ in the heavenlies and in Christ's Name claims the victory on the ground of His authority and power. The believer has no authority in himself and he must be careful to remember that any presumption will bring defeat and lay him open to Satan's influence, making him a tool of the enemy he would resist. But the truly humble believer speaks with all the authority of the Victor of Calvary.

CHAPTER XXVI

CHRIST OUR LIFE

We have been looking into God's Word seeking knowledge of the things of the Spirit. What is it that we have found? Have we found only knowledge? Knowledge of the things of the Spirit is necessary and good; but if we have found only knowledge, we continue to be poor indeed. We can know all these things and have no more of Christ, be no nearer to Him. Knowledge is not Christ; it cannot give Him to us; it can only lead us to Him. It can never give life or truly satisfy the soul; He alone can do so.

In the Old Testament, the Psalmist cries, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God" (Ps. 42:1, 2). David wanted the living God. In his psalms the one thing that stands out above all others is his great desire for direct, personal communion with the living God. It was in that alone that the longings of his soul could be met. The Law and the sacrifices meant much to him, but these merely pointed to God. It was in Him—the source and sum of all that the soul requires—and in Him alone that he found light and strength and peace.

We were glad, one day, when we heard a young convert say, "I do not have a religion, I have Christ". In the workshop some of his companions had asked him if his religion prohibited him from doing certain things and he prefaced his reply with that statement. We felt he had gone far and seen a clear light.

Christ is the fulness of God, of His wisdom and power and love. In Him, we find met all the longings of our soul. From Him, we drink the living waters; from Him, moment by moment, we receive light and strength; in Him, we find comfort and peace, triumph and rest. Without Him, we have nothing; we are weak and undone, poor and alone.

But how much there is to waylay us as we would approach Him! It may be religion. The form of things may take the place that He should occupy and in our religion we may think that we have Him. Instead of Him we have ceremonies, meetings, sermons, hymns. These may all use His Name, they may even point faithfully to Him, but they are not Christ. He is infinitely, supremely, gloriously greater than these. It may be doctrine that keeps us from Him, doctrine that is good and true. We may hold it, teach it, contend for it and yet not be dwelling with Him of Whom it speaks. We have it for itself and not for the Christ into

whose presence it would usher us, some of whose glory it would reveal to us. He is greater and more wonderful than the truest and deepest doctrine, which is merely some fact about Him, some revelation of Him.

Yea, even our knowledge of the deep things of the Spirit, of the Cross, of prayer, of God's will, may become an object that robs us of His life. That the revelations which Paul had received should not create pride in his heart, God had to permit the "thorn in the flesh". Is there any greater triumph of Satan than when he succeeds in getting a child of God to mix self-love with a witness to the deepest doctrine? Could there be a greater negation of such a witness?

When we stand in the presence of doctrine, spiritual truth that is sound and true, glorious and sublime, we may still be cold and unloving, hard and unforgiving, proud, contentious and self-sufficient. It is merely doctrine, academic tenets of our religion, ornaments of our spirituality and spiritual knowledge, of which we are proud. But when we go beyond doctrine into the presence of Him, the Christ of the Cross, Jesus seated triumphant at the right hand of the Father, then self bows in shame and we know we have nothing wherein to glory, no righteousness or wisdom or strength. There we become nothing and He becomes everything. Coldness and hardness and contention have no place there, but only love and its fruit, truth and obedience. We stand on holy ground.

The ministry to which the Lord has called us may take the place that He should occupy, if we come to think of it as our power, our work and not as Christ speaking His Word and working His work through us. Even our knowledge of the Lord's will may separate us from His presence, if we take His purpose into our hands to bring it to pass by our strength to the secret glory of our own heart.

When we realize that Christ is our goal, our life, our all, not religion or doctrine or revelation, we feel in our spirit a great release. We are freed from the deadness of the letter; we have gone beyond the sphere in which the Pharisee may cover his heart of sin with a cloak of religious works and orthodoxy. We have left that which never could satisfy our thirst for God and have entered into reality. We have found Him and communion and joy and strength, and we could never be content again with anything less. It was for that that Paul gladly, eagerly, counted everything loss.

Are we freed then from doctrine? Do the truths revealed in

God's Word become of less value? No, on the contrary, they become light and life. Before, they gave us knowledge, now they give us Him. When we stand in His presence we discern what they really mean, we behold their true glory. Now they are spiritual; now they are power. They are the blending rays of every hue from the one great prism breaking up "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" into its various parts that we may know it and behold its manifold beauty. But then they all reunite again into that one, perfect light: Christ.

When we stand in Christ's presence, doctrines become different to us. The Cross then touches our whole soul, every act, every thought. It becomes the Cross on which all our self-life must be crucified moment by moment that Christ may live within us. To Paul, Christ was everything and there was nothing without Him, Christ was his life, his wisdom, his power, his continual victory, his unspeakable joy. His whole life cried, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine". Doctrine to him was just facts about the living, indwelling Christ—how and why He came to be within, what He is as He is there, and what He is there to do. The believer, to Paul, was the man in Christ in whom Christ dwelt. The Church, to him, was "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all", and all doctrine concerning the Church was just facts regarding His presence in His Body, His purpose for it and His manifestation through its members by the wisdom and power of His Spirit.

In the Word of God we do not find religious dogmas but revealed facts about the living God and the living Christ. We are not given doctrines to accept as a religious code but spiritual facts to be experienced in our lives. God's purpose was not to give man a set of doctrines that he should accept by faith as a mysterious formula from the spiritual realm and learn by heart that he might state them correctly, but to provide him with spiritual truth that would be life, wisdom and power to him in the inner man.

We have seen congregations that had been taught sound doctrine for many years. They could answer questions on doctrine intelligently and give chapter and verse. But spiritual life was low. That doctrine was not the living Christ to them; it was dogma. They were poor and weak because they were experiencing little of His living presence within them. But when they were led to Him and the things of the flesh, of man's pride and wisdom and strength and desire, were counted but loss, then

life began to flow—His life, manifested by His Spirit through lives in union with Him.

There is no life in doctrine, or in religion, or in Church organization, or methods. The life is in Him alone and it flows from Him alone. How often it is sought everywhere else—in facts about Him, in our efforts for Him, or the worship the soul offers Him. But it is not there. All these leave our souls still thirsting for the living God, unsatisfied, bereaved.

We have cluttered our religion with much that is material that keeps us from Him. What we need to really satisfy our thirst is to divest ourselves as Paul did of everything that is not Christ—in the infinite purity of His love and holiness, in His absolute triumph over all Satan's power at the Cross, in the unconquerable might of His heavenly Throne, in the absolute certainty of every promise He has given, in His personal presence with all His glory within us.

What we gain is real, it satisfies with a purity of joy that is beyond expression. What we cast aside, no matter how real it may seem, is but a delusion that can never satisfy, for in it there is no life but only death.

What we need is Christ. What the Church needs is Christ. What the world in its blindness and suffering and sin needs is Christ. In Him alone is life and light and power. Let us seek Him, where He is to be found—at Calvary and at the right hand of the Throne of God that we may have Him and know Him within, and that His life and light and power may flow through us to others in joy and healing and resurrection life amid the darkness and death of this sin-stricken world.

Christ is our life. As He fills our self-loving hearts with Himself, the image and likeness of the God of perfect love is manifested anew in us, and God's purpose for us is fulfilled. There is communion between Him and us—the fellowship which brings perfect joy, the working together in the carrying out of the great purposes of love that through Christ bring life out of death. Then there is the fulfilment of the prayer which the Lord made for us to the Father:

That they all may be one;
as Thou Father art in Me and I in thee,
that they also may be one in Us;
that the Cosmos may believe that Thou hast sent Me,

And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them;
that they may be one even as We are one;

I in them and Thou in Me,

that they may be made perfect in one;

and that the Cosmos may know that Thou hast sent Me,

and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me

That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me

May be in them

And I in them

(John 17:21-23, 26)